THE HIDDEN VOICES IN SAMUEL BARBER'S *DESPITE AND STILL*: ROBERT GRAVES'S CREATIVITY AND JAMES JOYCE'S ORIGINALITY

by

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To All Who Persevere, Despite and Still…

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Chapter 1: THE SONG CYCLE AND ITS COMPOSER

Samuel Barber's (1910–81) *Despite and Still*, Op. 41 (1968) is often overlooked among the composer's song compositions for the vocal and intellectual challenges it poses to performers as well as audiences. While the composer's trademark lyricism is apparent, there is also a marked use of dissonance as well as multi-tonality throughout the cycle. Rather than setting poems by a single author, as is the case for most song cycles, Barber chose five texts by three different authors—three by English post-war poet Robert Graves (1895–1985), one by American poet Theodore Roethke (1908–63), and an excerpt from *Ulysses* (1922) by Irish writer James Joyce (1882–1941).

Right from the start, *Despite and Still* sets out to confuse and provoke. Written by multiple authors, the five texts set in the cycle show no overt connection in terms of their subject matter. Placing "A Last Song" as the first song in the cycle is only one of the many enigmas the texts of *Despite and Still* have in store for the listeners. From a lizard as a metaphor for a lover in "My Lizard" to Jesus's journey in "In the Wilderness," from a curious encounter in "Solitary Hotel" to a lover's desperate appeal in "Despite and Still," the rest of the cycle continues to puzzle.

The disparate sources from which the poems set in *Despite and Still* are drawn pose a major hurdle in establishing a coherent narrative, which is one of the principal defining characteristics of song cycles such as Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte* (1816) and Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* (1824).[1] The texts' multiple authorship dismisses not only the possibility of an inherent narrative, but also the singularity of a poetic persona, which could serve as another connective element for a cycle. An example

[1] See Laura Tunbridge, *The Song Cycle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) for a comprehensive discussion on the genre of song cycle and David Ferris, "Introduction," in *Schumann's Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3–24, for specific discussion on the contemporary understanding of the coherence of a song cycle.

of this is the poet in Schumann's *Dichterliebe* (1840)—while the poems in the cycle are not connected by a narrative, they are all told from the poet's point of view.

The majority of song cycles that present an inherent narrative set texts of a single origin, usually a collection of lyric poetry. These texts range from those with a self-contained, and more or less complete, narrative that is then transplanted to the song cycle, to collections of poems with only a loose narrative or a common theme, from which composers choose and order to outline a story. Schumann's *Frauenliebe und -leben* (1840), for example, belongs to the first type as it tells virtually the same story told in Chamisso's set of poems, with the only omission of the original prologue and epilogue. *Dichterliebe* (1840), on the other hand, belongs to the other end of the spectrum. Setting poems from Heine's *Lyrisches Intermezzo*, Schumann offers his rendition of a poet's literary responses to a series of stimuli, which can also be perceived as the poet's tale of heartbreak, a tale that is not originally implied in Heine's collection. In the middle of the spectrum are works such as Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*—by setting only part of Müller's eponymous collection, the composer made room for a narrative that is based on but different from the original story.

Much ink has been spilled over the thorny issue of what constitutes unity and coherence of a song cycle.[2] These range from studies that privilege the role of musical unity, specifically large-scale tonal and motivic design, such as Arthur Komar's monograph on *Dichterliebe*,[3] to ones that dwell extensively on textual coherence, be it presence of narrative or other forms of literary device, as shown in Susan Youens's seminal study on *Winterreise*.[4] All of the discussions touch upon varying degrees of musical and textual unity. Such generic fluidity is also evident in the nebulous use of terminologies: while Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*, for example, is the first known cycle with "*Liederkreis*" in the title, it displays, on the one hand, properties that are shared by subsequent song cycles, such as the return of

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[2] See Cyrus Hamlin, "The Romantic Song Cycle as Literary Genre," *Word and Music Studies: Defining the Field (1999)*, 113–34; Jürgen Thym, "A Cycle in Flux: Schumann's Eichendorff *Liederkreis*" in *Of Poetry and Song: Approaches to the Nineteenth-Century Lied* (Rochester: University of Rochester, 2010), 375–89.
[3] See essays by Arthur Komar in Robert Schumann, *Dichterliebe: an Authoritative Score*, ed. Arthur Komar (New York: W.W. Norton, 1971).
[4] Susan Youens, *Retracing a Winter's Journey: Schubert's Winterreise* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

musical materials from an earlier part of the cycle also found in *Frauenliebe und -leben*, and on the other, a feature that is hardly replicated in other cycles, namely the continuous musical interludes between the songs.[5]

The lack of a tangible narrative prompts the question of whether *Despite and Still* should be approached as a collection of songs or a song cycle. Indeed, similar concerns have been raised about many vocal compositions that are published as sets. A starting point for resolving this dilemma would be to evaluate the various factors that contribute to a work's cyclicity in the absence of an easily identifiable plot. In his investigation of Benjamin Britten's vocal oeuvre, Walter Bernhart identifies three types of song cycles, namely "loose," "literary," and "musical," which correspond to the dominant elements on which the work's unity is based.[6] Although Bernhart classifies Britten's *On this Island* (1936) and *A Charm of Lullabies* (1947) as "loose" song cycles, he differentiates the texts' varied pedigrees: whereas all the poems set in *On this Island* are taken from W. H. Auden's eponymous collection, the texts in *A Charm of Lullabies* have multiple authorships. In other words, "unity by author" and "unity by theme" are two of the ways in which song texts create unity throughout a cycle.[7]

In the case of Barber's *Despite and Still*, since it obviously lacks the unifying force of single authorship, the question becomes whether its textual unity can be established through "unity by theme." The diverse texts unsurprisingly invited criticism as a critic found them "disparate, compartmented, and unrelated to each other."[8] However, Barbara Heyman, Barber's biographer, observes that the texts in the cycle hint at the "profound biographical significance" of *Despite and Still,* conjecturing that the cycle might have acted as "a catharsis for the composer," highlighting the significance of the composer's choice

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[5] See discussion in Tunbridge, *The Song Cycle*, 6–7.
[6] Walter Bernhart, "Three Types of Song Cycles: The Variety of Britten's 'Charms'," in *Word and Music Studies: Essays on the Song Cycle and on Defining the Field (2001)*, ed. Walter Bernhart and Werner Wolf (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), 235–49.
[7] Bernhart, "Three Types of Song Cycles," 216.
[8] George Moushon, "Debuts and Reappearances," *High Fidelity/Musical America* (July 1969), 22.

of texts as they all "probe bleak themes about loneliness, lost love, and isolation—in the creative quest, in old age, in the pious mission."[9]

Successful song composers are often avid readers and lovers of literature. While it is likely that composers are drawn to setting the poems to music for the literary quality and innate musicality, it is also natural, and perhaps inevitable, that they find in the texts personal connection and resonance. Such connection makes attributing autobiographical connotations to their vocal music a tempting option, as illustrated in the discussions of much of Schumann's vocal music composed in his *Liederjahr* of 1840, the triumphant year of his hard-fought battle to wed Clara, as well as Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* (1904), where he set his own words that echoed the tragic events of his life.

Even though the invocation of the composer's life events in the understanding of a musical work often adds an extra dimension to the appreciation of the work and could be a useful addition to the performers' toolbox in achieving a holistic interpretation and performance, the method also attracts a valid criticism. Aside from the questions of whether such associations bear any musical significance, and whether such extramusical properties have a place in the discussion of a work's perception, there are other persisting problems. If one were to recognize the significance of the autobiographical nature of text selections as an integral part of the understanding of a work, then any contradictions between what is depicted in the texts and the composer's life implies a need for reconciliation that often results in impeding, instead of enriching, a coherent understanding. In her criticism of the choice to resolve inconsistencies encountered in the primarily musical approach to song cycle analysis by invoking biographical information, Lodato points to the method's fundamental flaw that "hermeneutic factors can actually undermine the cyclicity of the work that is otherwise evident in the text and the music."[10] Her study argues that the discrepancy between acknowledging the tonality scheme as the primary unifying factor in Strauss's *Mädchenblumen* (1888) and the contradicting intention expressed by the composer to

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[9] Barbara Heyman, *Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 465.
[10] Suzanne Lodato, "Problems in Song Cycle Analysis and the Case of *Mädchenblumen*" in *Word and Music Studies: Essays on the Song Cycle and on Defining the Field (2001)* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), 103.

his publisher perfectly illustrates the fact that a composer's intentions and the work's perception can and often function independently. The unviability of explaining compositional choices with biographical events is also evident in the doomed love story recounted in Schumann's *Frauenliebe und -leben* (1840), one that cannot be further from the newfound hope and joy that preoccupied the composer's psyche at the time. While attempts have been made to ascribe a more nuanced understanding of the composer's incongruous choice of texts, such as that it was his way of championing women's dedication to family and strength in overcoming atrocities,[11] they are further proof that subjective readings of text selections can be haphazard—at best, they serve merely as a lens through which a work can be viewed.

In focusing on Barber's lifelong preoccupation with the prominent themes present in the cycle, Heyman's evaluation casts the composition of *Despite and Still* as a confirmation for his response to preceding events in his life as well as a logical precursor to what followed—his next opus of songs (Op. 45). In a fashion consistent with her evaluation of previous works, Heyman describes the texts set in the later set as "particularly portentous, considering the composer's anguished state of mind." This state of mind, she continues, is preoccupied with the ideas of "the depletion of the source of creative energy" and "the eventuality of death, thus the completion of a life."[12] The approach of evaluating compositions with a chronological framework is potentially problematic because, as Walther Dürr states in his editorial remarks in Schubert's *Neue Ausgabe Werke*, "the work of art appear[s], not primarily as a thing in itself, but as a representative of a stage in the development of, or even in function of, a later work."[13]

Although Heyman's approach of contextualizing his compositions within the events of his life is a natural choice given the chronological nature of the genre of biography, in focusing her discussion on discrete musical features of each individual song in the cycle, she displays minimal effort in evaluating the cycle as a coherent entity. Such approach, one that focuses on the overall arc of the development of a composer's musical styles and literary tastes instead of coherence within the cycle, fails to extract the

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[11] Kristina Muxfeldt, "*Frauenliebe und Leben* Now and Then." *Nineteenth-Century Music* 25, no. 1 (Summer 2001): 27–48.
[12] Heyman, *Samuel Barber*, 489.
[13] Quoted in Richard Kramer, *Distant Cycles: Schubert and the Conceiving of Song* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 12.

coherent factors internal to the cycle, both in terms of the selection of the text and musical styles. Barber belongs to the group of composers of high literary caliber who often demonstrate lifelong commitment to providing pertinent musical responses to the expressive requirements of the texts. Their text selections, however, are also inevitably influenced by the events of their lives. This is especially true for works of an enigmatic nature. Considering the highly subjective nature of both the composers' appreciation of the poetry and their experiential connection with the sentiment expressed, a distinction between them is never easy to make. Thus, with ample caution against invoking the composer's life events as the *sole* creative impetus, an approach incorporating a deep reading of the texts with the aim to shed light on the composer's creative choices should be considered for a comprehensive understanding of a work. In regards to *Despite and Still*, given the songs are the medium in which the authors' ideologies interact with those of the composer's, a look at how the themes of isolation and lack of inspiration as well as theories of creativity are depicted by both the composer and the three authors serves to elucidate the manifold meanings conveyed in the cycle.

Barber and *Despite and Still*

Barber's early works, including the unpublished ones, share much of Brahms's melodic and harmonic vocabulary. His training and experience as a singer also contributed to the lyrical and natural approach to his vocal lines. Barber's generally tuneful approach to vocal music places him in the company of composers such as Vaughan Williams and Britten, whose works are popular among performers to this day. That is not to say, however, that he never ventured away from melodic lyricism—he frequently employs angular and chromatic melodies, almost always in order to serve the text and illustrate the imagery or moods conveyed. Another signature of Barber's compositions is his imaginative use of irregular rhythm and meter that are employed to respect the natural speech rhythm, which once again is driven by his desire to champion the texts.

Barber showed deep interest in poetry from his early years and he set to music texts of a variety of styles, starting with works by nineteenth-century American poets. By the time he commenced his studies at the Curtis Institute, he developed a penchant for Celtic literature and began to set poems by James Joyce and James Stephen. His literary taste continued to grow and encompass many European writers, which was also an influence from his uncle Sidney Homer. All of Barber's vocal compositions published under a single opus number set texts by multiple authors, with the single exception of Op. 10, which is a set of 3 poems from James Joyce's *Chamber Music*. This is unsurprising given the composer's vast literary interests, but it also points to his desire for agency in grouping and organizing texts of different origins, forms, and subject matters.

The way in which scholarly discussions of his works are organized is also a reflection of the lack of a sense of unity in his vocal sets. In her dissertation on Barber's literary tastes and text setting, Jean Louise Kreiling traces the gradual development of his proclivity for works by English and Irish writers, whose works make up the majority of his published songs.[14] The chapters are organized based on the source of the texts he chose to set, beginning with James Joyce, the most frequently set author among

[14] Jean Louise Kreiling, "The Songs of Samuel Barber: A Study in Literary Taste and Text-Setting" (PhD diss., The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1986).

Barber's works, followed by groups of British, American, and other international authors. As a result, songs from a single opus or collection, except for Op. 10, due to its single authorship, are often discussed in separate chapters. *Despite and Still* is no exception—while she illustrates the progression in the portrayal of certain recurring themes, such as the notion of nostalgia as well as his interests in "art about art," the separate discussions of the songs within go to show a disregard for approaching the cycle as a unified work.[15]

Similarly, in her biography of the composer, Heyman examines his songs according to the order of publication. Whilst this is probably due to the chronological nature of the genre of biography, it is also indicative of her observations of inherent unity among the sets. Her universal ascription of biographically-related themes to the majority of the sets confirms her evaluation that his life events and dispositions play a dominant role in the composer's selection of song texts rather than thematic unity within the cycles. For example, she mitigates the absence of strong musical and textual connections in Op. 13 by invoking "the clarity of imagery and musicality of meter that held special attraction for Barber" and how the poems relate to "subjects that were significant to the composer's personal life."[16]

Remarking on Barber's choice of texts for his songs during the last fifteen years of his life (1967–81), a period of semi-seclusion in which he struggled with depression, alcoholism, and creative blocks, Heyman brings attention to his "preoccupation with dark and quasi-religious themes—loneliness, rededication, reconciliation, and solitude."[17] Indeed, a number of factors led to the composer's depression in the later years of his life. His profound friendship with Gian Carlo Menotti, one that led to remarkably productive personal and professional collaborations, started to deteriorate just before the 1960s. Menotti gained the reputation as one of the foremost American opera composers since his 1937 opera *Amelia Goes to the Ball* and had only ever written libretti for his own operas until their collaboration on Barber's *Vanessa* (1958), Barber's first and highly successful opera. Even though their partnership was tumultuous

[15] Kreiling, "The Songs of Samuel Barber," 44, 59.
[16] Heyman, *Samuel Barber*, 201.
[17] Heyman, *Samuel Barber*, 464.

at times, it came as a surprise when Barber was commissioned to compose an opera to mark the opening of the new Metropolitan Opera House in 1966 that he did not choose to collaborate with Menotti, possibly due to his previous libretto's negative European reviews. Having set his heart on his favorite Shakespearean play, *Antony and Cleopatra*, Barber began to write his own libretto. Seemingly unbeknownst to Barber, Franco Zeffirelli, whose production of *Falstaff* was well received, was invited to write the libretto by the Met. Menotti recalled years later that the opera was "perhaps the only moment of bitterness that actually ever existed"[18] between them, hinting at his disappointment that he did not get the opportunity to be the librettist for the opera.

The disappointing outcome of *Antony and Cleopatra*, Op. 40 (1966) was rooted in the wide chasm between the visions of Barber and Zeffirelli, who served not only as the librettist, but also director, as well as costume and set designer for the opera. The stylistic differences between the two affected both the production and the structure of the opera, since the libretto did not cater to Barber's lyrical style. Barber's publisher, Hans Heinsheimer, opines that the failure was a "terrible catastrophe from which he never recovered."[19] While it may be an exaggeration to attribute, as Heyman contends,[20] the composer's breakdown to this single so-called failure, there is hardly any doubt that it worsened his depression as well as aggravated the dry spells of creativity that marred the rest of his life. It was during this period, perhaps to seek respite from all the turmoil, that the troubled composer turned to the genre closest to his heart—vocal music—and composed *Despite and Still*. Given the timing, it is indeed difficult to deny the impact his life events had on the composition of the cycle.

By naming the cycle after the last song, Barber shows his inclination for the songs to be performed as an entity despite the challenges to the work's candidacy for a cycle posed by the multiple authorship and lack of palpable narrative. Through a thorough understanding of the poetry by Robert Graves, the poet featured the most in the cycle, the present study establishes a connection among his three

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[18] Menotti, BBC broadcast, 23 January 1982, quoted in Heyman, *Samuel Barber*, 434.
[19] Hans Heinsheimer, "Hans W. Heinsheimer: Interview with Peter Dickinson, New York City, May 13, 1981" in *Barber Remembered: A Centenary Tribute,* ed. Peter Dickinson (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2010), 158.
[20] Heyman, *Samuel Barber*, 462.

poems—the framework in which the Muse figure plays a variety of roles in the process of creativity. The other two seemingly unrelated texts, as will be addressed below, add to the framework by introducing yet more aspects of creativity. His selection of texts and slight textual alterations (discussed below), as well as the musical language employed in relation to the presentation of specific words and ideas, contribute to the set's complex array of meanings. As will become clear, the notions of originality and, by extension, creativity, are at the center of *Despite and Still*. Not only do the texts contain the many aforementioned common themes that played an important role in the composer's life, they also probe issues related to his very identity of being a composer and the creative activities entailed, which lead to a deeper sense of biographical significance of the cycle than a mere collection of poems on the common themes does.

It is common for a song cycle's title to highlight its dominant unifying element. Some indicate the presence of a narrative—*Die schöne Müllerin* and *Frauenliebe und -leben* to name but a couple—while others, Britten's *Winter Words* for example, point to a recurring theme among the songs. In the case of *Despite and Still*, the naming of the cycle after the title of the poem set in the final song hints to the overarching notions of contradiction and overcoming of hardship. Through his selection and organization of the seemingly disjointed texts, Barber gave a nuanced response that conveys a complex and close-knit network of meanings from his reflections on the notion of creativity.

The next chapter will examine the three Graves poems based on an overview of Graves's idiosyncratic view on creativity, one that relies on the Muse figure, whose various guises are keenly felt not only in the poems but also in Barber's settings. The discussion then continues on to include Roethke's "My Lizard," in which the Muse exists in yet another form. The final chapter will address the remaining song, "Solitary Hotel," which poses the biggest challenge to establishing the cyclicity of *Despite and Still*. While the Muse figure is absent in "Solitary Hotel," another important aspect of creativity, namely the notion of originality, is highlighted within the text by Joyce and in the song by Barber. In examining the author's commentary on the idea of creativity, the peculiarity of "Solitary Hotel" may be interpreted as the composer's own commentary on the very topic.

While it is not my goal to ascribe meaning and intention to Barber's cycle, the notion of an artist's struggles with his Muse who doubles as his lover provides a foundation for fruitful discussion and understanding. The relationship between Barber and Menotti is not strictly analogous to that of an artist and his Muse, but Menotti's resentment in the other's choice of librettist for Barber's opera *Antony and Cleopatra*, as well as the failing relationship between the two point to the timeliness of the composition. Such sentiment finds its counterpart in Graves's philosophy on the conflicting relationship between the artist and his Muse as well as the two as lovers. While it is controversial to consider biographical information in the understanding of a work, in the case of *Despite and Still* it offers vital clues that lead to a meaningful interpretation. Viewed in this light, the textual and musical materials as well as their organization invite performers and listeners to contemplate the question, "Despite the loss of one, can the other still be maintained?"

Chapter 2: THE OTHER VOICES IN DESPITE AND STILL

At first glance, Graves's "A Last Poem"[1] appears to be a lament for the poet's dying inspirations. It also gives the impression that it is the last poem he will ever write, until one pays attention to the indefinite article in the title. The denotation of "last" implies a sense of uniqueness that calls for the definite article instead. After all, if the poem were to be followed by another, then it would no longer be the *last*. It follows that at the time of naming it "A Last Poem," the writer believes or knows that although he intends this to be his last, he also acknowledges that he will end up writing more. Is such unrelenting drive to write welcomed by the writer? Is the author an aging artist whose weary mind can no longer catch up with his everlasting drive to write, or is he one who, having written all that he has done, wants nothing more than to put an end to it, to be relieved of the endless creations?

Towards the end of the poem, the poet wonders if he would ever hear from "her" the affirmation he desires: "But this is truth written by you only, / And for me only. / Therefore, love, have done." It is unclear what has been "done" and by whom—does it mean love has been achieved by the lovers, or is she assuring him that he has accomplished his goals and is now permitted to stop? Shakespeare used a similar turn of phrase in Act 3, Scene 5 of *Romeo and Juliet*, in which Lady Capulet consoles Juliette after the death of her cousin Tybalt. Growing tiresome of Juliette's useless tears, Lady Capulet reasons with her that even if her tears could wash Tybalt out of his grave, they could not make him live again and therefore she should stop crying lest she wishes to look daft: "And if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him live. *Therefore, have done*. Some grief shows much of love, / But much of grief shows still some want of wit."[2] Seen in this light, the poem expresses the protagonist's ultimate wish for her assurance that he can stop his endless quest for inspiration. He is also cognizant of the criteria for this—his exclusive devotion to her and her recognition of his ability to speak about truth through his poetry.

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[1] Robert Graves, *Collected Poems, 1965* (London: Cassell), 338.
[2] Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, act 3 scene 5.

"A Last Poem" is one of Graves's later poems and embodies the poet's main aesthetic and poetic preoccupation. It also is a testament to the extent to which his life is integrated with his work. As will become clear, the notions of creativity, in particular inspirations from a Muse figure to the artist, as well as the conflation of poetry and truth are central to Graves's idiosyncratic views on poetry writing. His obsession with the notion of the Muse as a source of inspiration permeates his three poems in the cycle and sets the work aside from others that are also centered around the various facets of an intimate relationship, making the cycle *Despite and Still* a work through which Barber reflects on the interactions between his own relationships and his creativity. This chapter starts with a discussion of the central themes of Graves's poetic theories raised in "A Last Poem," which will then serve as the framework for the analyses of his other two poems in the cycle and eventually Barber's settings of the three poems.

Creativity and Truth

The truth and the resulting relief in having attained truth alluded to towards the end of "A Last Poem" beg the questions of whether the purpose of art is to present truth and if seeking truth is the ultimate objective of creativity. Do artists set out to express emotions in order to speak about the human condition, or, are they, as some might argue, agents through which messages are channeled from some divine source? To address these questions, it is necessary to consider what constitutes truth. Indeed, the notion of truth as expressed through the art of poetry is deeply rooted in literary history. The Renaissance ideal finds its archetype in figures such as Leonardo da Vinci, for they demonstrated both an unquenchable curiosity and inventive imagination in their work. The reverence for universal knowledge in the learned man, who is equally well versed in science and art, continued to develop side by side with the focus on expertise in the various fields that propelled societal progression. The Romantics in the nineteenth century, equipped with their new freedom and interest in folk culture, switched focus to mystery and superstition. Undoubtedly rooted in their obsession with nature, their approach often invoked imagination to transcend experience and aspired to reflect on spiritual truth. For authors, however, their

medium of words and letters warrants a level of precision that points to objective truths but at the same time also embraces subjective interpretations by its creator.

The paradoxical nature of literature regarding the depiction of truth is embodied in the genre of autobiography. The German literary giant Goethe (1749–1832) puts this very dilemma front and center in the title of his own autobiography published in 1833—*Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit* (*From my Life: Poetry and Truth*). The book, in essence, tells facts of his life as verifiable data, yet the presentation of which is inevitably subjective due to the personal nature of the author's interpretation, or his "poetic truth," if you will. That the word "*Dichtung*" could be translated as both "poetry" and "fiction" is particularly illuminative of Goethe's view on the ability of words to speak about "truth," whatever the term may entail. The word's ambivalent and potentially contradictory meanings also point to the author's license in fictive embellishment of truth through the medium of poetry.

Covering the first twenty-six years of his life, *Dichtung und Wahrheit* charts a change in Goethe's conception of the relationship between truth and poetry. In his monograph on Goethe's book, Bowman identifies three stages to this change, the first of which sees the poet joining other like-minded individualists in identifying themselves "as the creator 'par excellence,' the Promethean genius, who, god-like, forms men and things after his own image."[3] The association of creativity with divinity allows for the argument that there exists a divine source from which meanings and, more importantly, the standard of beauty can be derived. The young poet believed that, acting as the messenger for the divine source of truth, he was using "the most effective medium for concentrating the disorderliness of life into a meaningful whole."[4] The apparent dichotomy between the subjectivity of beauty and objectivity of truth is indeed at the core of what led to the changes in Goethe's perception.

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[3] Derek Bowman. *Life Into Autobiography: A Study of Goethe's Dichtung und Wahrheit (*Berne: Herbert Lang, 1971), 15.
[4] Bowman. *Life Into Autobiography,* 16.

Creativity and the Muse

The next stage in Bowman's observation regarding the evolution of Goethe's thoughts is the result of the poet's reflection on the sanctity of his status. Goethe challenged the supreme status of all poets, one that claims a communion with the gods and that "his feelings are the be-all and end-all of art," instead he contended that the process of inspiration was now relegated to the time when "an unnamed apparition hands her gift to the poet."[5] This "unnamed apparition," as the source of the poet's inspiration, probably refers to the figure of the Muse who featured in Greco-Roman religion and mythology as the patron goddesses of poets and musicians. The multitude of goddesses is demonstrated in the varying attributes given to the statues of the Muse figure that correspond to the different arts with which they are associated: some hold a scroll while others play a lyre. There is no consensus among poets across generations as to whether Muses exist, but even those who believe in their existence do not agree on the ways and degrees to which their creative process is affected. Nonetheless, the figure is and has always been a popular subject matter for poetry, none more so than for Robert Graves himself.

Robert Graves's *The White Goddess*

The author of *The Greek Myths* (1955), a compendium of Greek mythology, Graves was a classicist with extensive knowledge and interests in the subject. His predilection with Hellenistic legends, however, had in fact long been a dominant factor in his poetic career and exists in various guises from his early translations and analyses of Greek myths to his speculative study of poetic inspirations, *The White Goddess: A Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth* (1948). In this book-length essay, he fleshed out his idiosyncratic system of beliefs on the psychology of poetic creativity. That his mythopoeic theory was highly controversial is evident in the struggles he faced in getting it published. If *The White Goddess* was to become Graves's most important prose work, its potential publishers certainly had no inkling of the success to come. His then regular publisher, Cassell, declined the book; Oxford University Press in the

[5] Bowman. *Life Into Autobiography,* 16.

United Kingdom as well as Macmillan in the States followed suit, leaving Graves distraught until T. S. Eliot took on the project on behalf of Faber.

The legend of the White Goddess, a figure found in many ancient myths, is not only the subject matter of the book, but also the means through which his discourse on the inspiration of poetry writing is constructed. His appropriation of the theories and etymologies in transforming her into the all-encompassing figure of the Mother-Mistress-Muse entails marked deviations from what is widely accepted by classical scholars. He establishes her as the great fertility goddess of the original matriarchal age in all civilizations, whose role as the leader of the politically- and socially-dominant women was supplanted by the god of reason. Such a dislocation of power, Graves contends, distracted mankind away from nature, which in turn alienated poets of generations to come from their true Muses. Hence, successful poets are the ones who achieve the re-establishment of their relationship. It follows that if the poet continues to worship her, then he would be honored with her gifts of poetic insights—echoing the gift from "the unnamed apparition" for Goethe—and thereby regain access to the quintessential themes of poetry: the birth, life, death, and most importantly the resurrection of the goddess.

Similar to Goethe's autobiography, Graves's book, as illustrated by its subtitle, *A Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth,* is an amalgamation of two genres. On the one hand, the detailed account of their historical significance Graves incorporated in his rendition of the mythologies gives the impression that the work is a version of the extent legends surrounding the White Goddess. On the other hand, his assimilation of the figure of the White Goddess with his poetic creativity is not an academic endeavor, but rather a "testament of a practicing poet"[6] or a metaphor, indicating the personal realm that the tale occupies. When challenged by a stranger for the essay's lack of footnotes and scholarly apparatus, he replied, in a letter, that "*The White Goddess* is about how poets think: it's not a scientific book or I'd have given it notes and an immense bibliography of works I hadn't read…It's a crazy book & I didn't mean to

[6] Martin Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves: His Life and Work* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1995), 390.

write it."[7] Thus, the book is a combination of an objective tale retold and an autobiographical assimilation of personal insights explicated from her legend. The work's idiosyncrasy and peculiarity prompted many of its readers to wonder whether the author's beliefs are to be taken literally, a problem that he indeed had anticipated.[8]

Graves's obsession with the figure of the White Goddess does not stop at his theorizing of her role in poetic inspiration. A look at Graves's output from around the time when he conceived his essays on the White Goddess to, and beyond, its publication shows that far from being merely a source of inspirations, she in fact plays a pivotal role in his poetry and is prominently featured as the subject matter of many of his poems. Since her introduction in his *Poems 1938–1945*, the figure of the White Goddess became a staple in his poetry, appearing in a variety of guises from the early explicit intimations of the actual mythology to the subtle references of the figure as the poems' topos in his later collections.[9] His work written over the two decades surrounding the writing and publication of his seminal essay shows that the poet derived some of his poetic practices as well as philosophical beliefs about poetry from his study of the White Goddess's behaviors and thoughts. Indeed, the deeper he delved into her myth, the more he found resonance with his own creative process in her relationships with the poets. The White Goddess became the means through which he made sense of as well as solidified and systemized his long-felt experience.

Graves's fascination with his Muse figure started decades before the writing of *The White Goddess*. From his witty essay entitled *Contemporary Techniques of Poetry* (1925) to the longer book of the same year, *Poetic Unreason*, Graves turned towards delineating his own psychological processes in the creation of poetry and demonstrated a high level of self-awareness in terms of his creativity. Despite his later remark that the latter was a confused book, there is little doubt that he displays a firm belief, much like that of the young Goethe's, that poetry is "given" to a poet, who, as the receiver of inspiration,

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[7] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 395.
[8] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 395.
[9] For example, on the theme of betrayal: "Theseus and Ariadne", "Lament for Pasiphaë"; and "Muse" poems: "Lyceia," "The Visitation," "Apple Island, " In Her Praise," and "The Three-Faced."

must respect the gift.[10] Such beliefs, as Graves's biographer Seymour-Smith describes, are "substitutes for what he truly needed: something exterior to himself, to which he could devote himself." His unhappy mind, Seymour-Smith continues, "was busily conjuring up some phantom woman."[11] In reality, this "phantom woman" was embodied by a number of Muse-possessed women in the poet's life. They dominated his psyche, dictating both his personal and professional lives, and in turn continued to shape and inform his philosophy on poetry writing. That it became impossible to distinguish "whether the feminine pronoun in his poems refers to woman or Goddess or both"[12] is proof of the extent to which the distinction between his lover and his Muse was blurred.

Under Graves's pen, the White Goddess shares many ritualistic and functional similarities with deities who can be historically verified. However, the poet's rendition is highly dependent of his personal experience that, as Seymour-Smith asserts, "[f]or Graves this *is* no 'theory': it is, and was, his whole life, his experience."[13] Indeed, one of the reasons why her tale remains mysterious to many is that she is the product of his deliberate effort to integrate the various goddesses' diverse qualities into his personal White Goddess. Besides, the fact that it is a poet writing about the nature of poetic inspirations implies a sense of personal pertinence where the writer invokes his own creative experiences. As such, his theory is personal not only in an autobiographical sense, it also pertains to each individual poet's interaction with the goddess whose guises, roles, and qualities change according to the "various natural and human phases so that she is both a radically chameleonic figure throughout the entirety of human life and also a single, enduring, archetypal creature."[14]

Ever since he was falsely reported dead during World War I, Graves's reputation has attracted much attention, no less because of his scandalous liaisons with two married women that ultimately led to their divorces. He married his first wife, Nancy Nicholson, shortly after the war ended. After graduating from the University of Oxford, Graves took an appointment at Cairo University, where the family stayed

[10] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 112.
[11] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 112.
[12] Brian Jones, Review of *Poems 1965–68* by Robert Graves, *London Magazine* 8, no. 11 (1 February, 1969), 80.
[13] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 393 (emphasis original).
[14] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 393.

for only a short period of time, accompanied by the American poet Laura Riding. His tie with Riding and, more importantly, her literary preoccupation, left a long-lasting impact that went beyond their separation in 1939, foreshadowing the directions to which his writings turned as well as further stimulating the entwinement between his life and his work.

For Graves, the conventional figure of the Muse exists vicariously through Muse-possessed women, the most important of whom, as the American literary critic Douglas Day observes, is Laura Riding, who acted as a conduit for the Muse and heightened his creative powers to an unparalleled degree.[15] Known as much for her poetry as her association with Graves, Riding caused a literary scandal at her failed suicide attempt in 1929 that eventually led to the break up of Graves's first marriage with Nancy Nicholson. Graves and Riding left and resided in Majorca until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936. Riding was his first Muse, whose effect on his work outlasted their relationship. While his later associations with a number of such Muse-possessed women, particularly those during the post-World War II years, were disastrous and tumultuous, they were also instrumental to his creativity. These self-inflicted adversities, which brought out Graves's strengths and conviction, served as an important source of inspiration. Graves's life was so inseparably intertwined with his work that, as is the case for many artists, his life was not only reflected in his poetry, his life *was* his art.

Such engulfment of an artist's life by his art is exemplified by many late Romantic and fin-de-siècle artists such as the writer Peter Altenberg, whose eccentric lifestyles and subject matter of his writing illustrate how an artist's own existence becomes the be-all and end-all of the art. The topic of the relationship between art and life divides artists and philosophers into two camps. Those who purport that art imitates life, led by Aristotle, subscribe to the idea of mimesis, as opposed to those who endorse anti-mimesis, a notion succinctly argued by Oscar Wilde who famously wrote "life imitates art far more than art imitates life."[16] These two opposing philosophical frameworks create a dichotomy that dismisses the

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[15] Douglas Day, *Swifter Than Reason: The Poetry and Criticism of Robert Graves* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), 99.
[16] Oscar Wilde, "The Decay of Lying" in *Intentions* (New York: Brentano's, 1905), 32.

mutual effect that one must have on the other. Just as it is impossible for an artist's work to be completely uninformed by his/her life experience, artistic inclinations inevitably play a part in an artist's lifestyle. Between the two extremes of mimesis and anti-mimesis exists a spectrum that reflects the varying levels of impact an artist's life have on his/her art—while some live their lives quite independently of their artistic pursuits, others allow their lives to be consumed by their art, thereby altering their behaviors according to their artistic inclinations. The desire inferred to at the end of "A Last Poem," where the poet craves to be affirmed by "her" as the sole possessor of "truth," expresses Graves's inclination to allow art to dictate a major part of his life. This imagined affirmation permits him to terminate his cycle of creativity, or suffering, depending how one sees it. If it was unclear whether his continued drive to write is a curse over which he has no control or an answer to his prayer for a renewal of inspirations, it is because it was neither. The crux of the poem, it turns out, lies within "her," as she holds the key to the end of his sufferings. Even though she is not given a voice in the poem—what little she says is only expressed through him—both his well-being and his inspirations, the core of his existence as a poet, are at her mercy.

"A Last Song"

Graves himself called upon "A Last Poem" in his 1963 lectures at the University of Oxford, where he was Professor of Poetry between 1961–66. He later combined the materials covered in three lectures into an essay titled "Intimations of the Black Goddess." Although similar to his theory in *The White Goddess,* the figure of the Black Goddess differs in her certitude of love. This certitude however, does not come without a price. After invoking Eurydice as a metaphor for the poet's Muse, he continues to assert that she "alternates between the worlds of good and evil, plenty and lack; and her poet will have his head torn off and his limbs gnawed by greedy teeth if he attempts to change her."[17] The ultimate honor for him, thus, is for her to choose him over all others. For that to happen, he must unquestionably devote

[17] Robert Graves, "Intimations of the Black Goddess" in *Mammon and the Black Goddess* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1965), 161.

himself to pleasing her. Is his devotion even voluntary? Carter seems to think so: "The muse is never satisfied, so the true poet is condemned perpetually to worry at his love for her in poems that call upon the next before the ink is dry on the last. It is a hapless fate, but one in which Graves, of course, willingly colludes."[18] But what are his rewards? Indeed, he loves her not for her virtues, the fact that she is his Muse who possesses power over him means that his sole existence is to channel truth through his words. Her enigmatic temperament not only does not repulse him, it is what draws him to her. Nor does he want her to be any different, instead, he believes that if he stays loyal for long enough, then "one day, Eurydice must mount into the everlasting Garden of Paradise which she planted, and there make him her *sole* lover,"[19] hence granting him the power to speak about the truth. Such consuming feelings of anguish and apprehension for dying inspiration are precisely the subject of "A Last Poem."

The closest Barber came to expressing the idea of receiving inspiration from an external source was his answer to a question posed by James Tocco in a TV program commemorating his sixty-seventh birthday. Commenting on the extraordinarily long time he took to compose the notoriously difficult last movement of his piano sonata, Barber says "I had to wait for that fugue quite a while."[20] Although Barber never spoke about the kind of Muse-possessed figure that overwhelmed Graves's psyche, he likely found resonance with Graves's creative process. Another indicator of the personal nature of the cycle is the alterations Barber made to the texts. By changing the title and texts of Graves's "A Last Poem" into "A Last Song," the composer made the song his own—if "A Last Poem" embodies Graves's "art about art" impulse, then Barber's "A Last Song" is his "song about songs."

Following the intriguing and ambivalent title of "A Last Song," the main body of the poem raises even more questions than it answers. After the first iteration of "A last song," we hear "a very last," which is followed by "yet another." The words "very," indicating a higher degree of finality and "yet another," an emphatic, almost surprised, proclamation, hint at an uneasiness that culminates in the exclamation in

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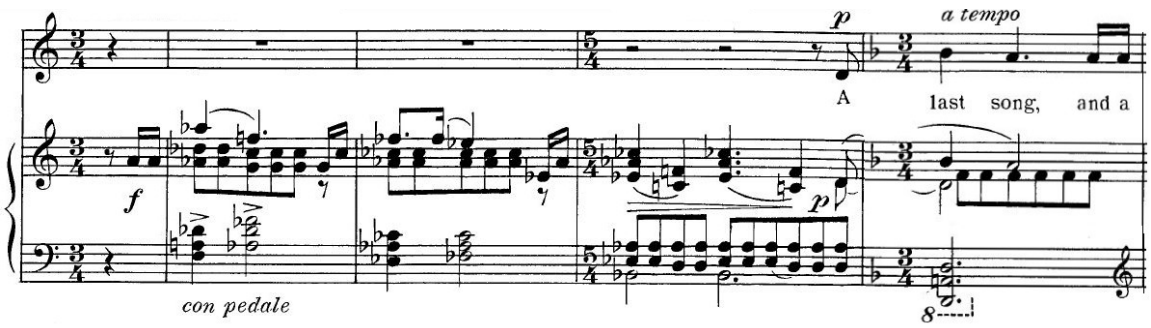
[18] D. N. G. Carter, *Robert Graves: The Lasting Poetic Achievement* (Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes & Noble, 1989), 255–56.
[19] Graves, "Intimations of the Black Goddess," 161 (emphasis mine).
[20] Barber, interview by James Tocco, *Happy Birthday, Samuel Barber! (Camera Three)*, CBS, March 6, 1977.

the second line, "O, when can I give over?" The melody rises gradually in a wave-like figure, highlighting the increasing tension, as he demands an end to this endless pursuit.

The ambivalent tonality, evident right from the beginning, reflects the enigmatic nature of the text. Loaded with conflicting tonalities and metric changes, the short three-measure introduction foreshadows the conflicting texts to come. The anacrusis on A is immediately followed on the downbeat of m. 1 by an augmented D-flat chord on the left hand and a hollow chord of A-flat and D-flat on the right, creating a strong dissonance that is enhanced by the accented articulations (Example 2.1).[21] The right hand then plays another hollow chord of fourths (G, C, F) on the second beat, clashing with the left hand that has switched mode to a D-flat minor chord. The second measure moves away from the dissonance and quartal harmony towards more traditional triadic harmony: F-flat major on the right and A-flat minor on the left. The left hand once again switches back to quartal chords in next measure as the right hand alternates between a A-flat minor chord and a perfect fourth (C, F). The B-flat pedal in the bass, together with the chords above builds the expectation of a resolution in m. 3 to the tonality of E-flat, which is met instead with a dissonant D minor. The surprise is further enhanced by the entrance of the voice on D at the end of m. 2, which, instead of being resolved as the leading note to E-flat, leaps up to a B-flat, as an accented appoggiatura.

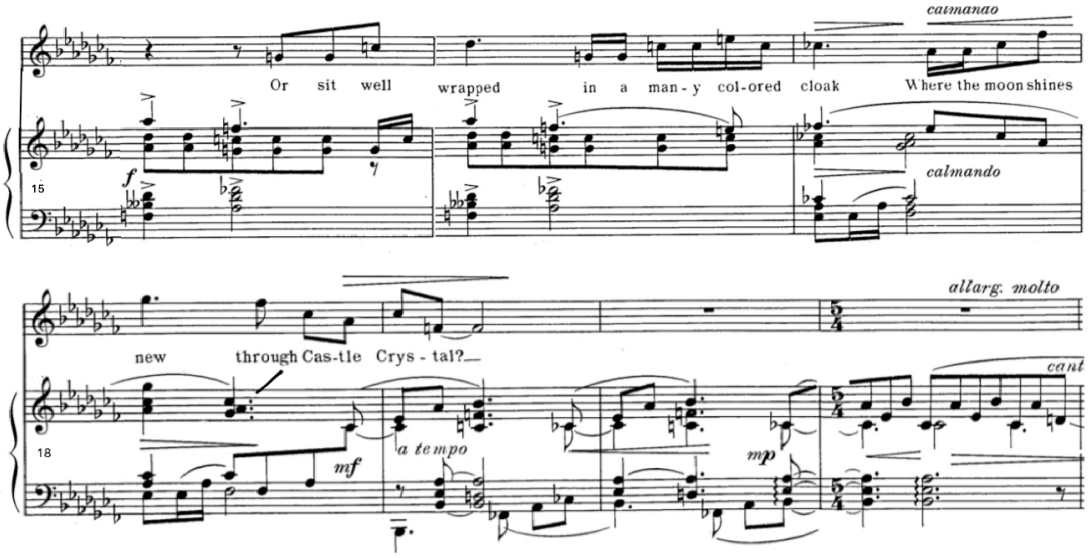


Example 2.1 "A Last Song," piano introduction, mm. 1–4

The level of dissonance decreases in the course of the short introduction—starting with the highly chromatic first measure, to the layered triads in the second and a dominant-sounding third. Such

[21] All musical analyses are based on Samuel Barber, *Despite and Still: Song Cycle for Voice and Piano (Op. 41) High Voice* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1969).

progression is presented over a two-note motif of a descending interval, repeated in a gradually compressed rhythm, bringing a sense of urgency to the resolution and highlighting the arrival of an overdue tonality. The searching and foreboding introduction not only sets up the mood of the song, it also previews the kind of musical language that is used throughout the cycle.

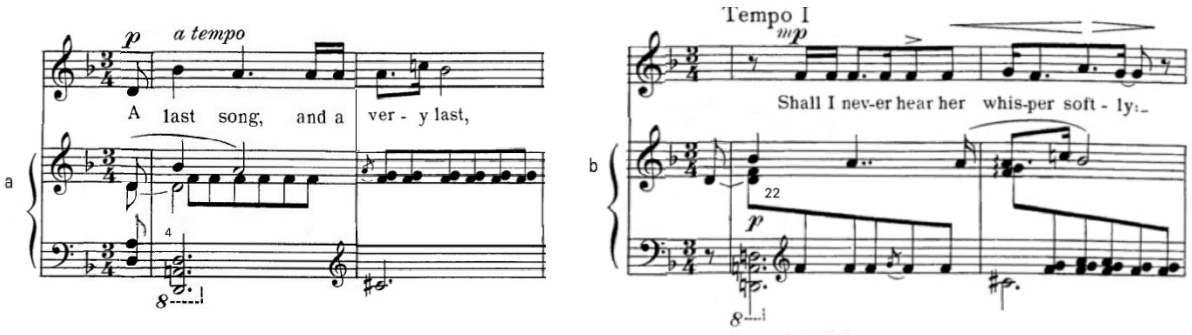


Example 2.2 "A Last Song," mm. 15–21

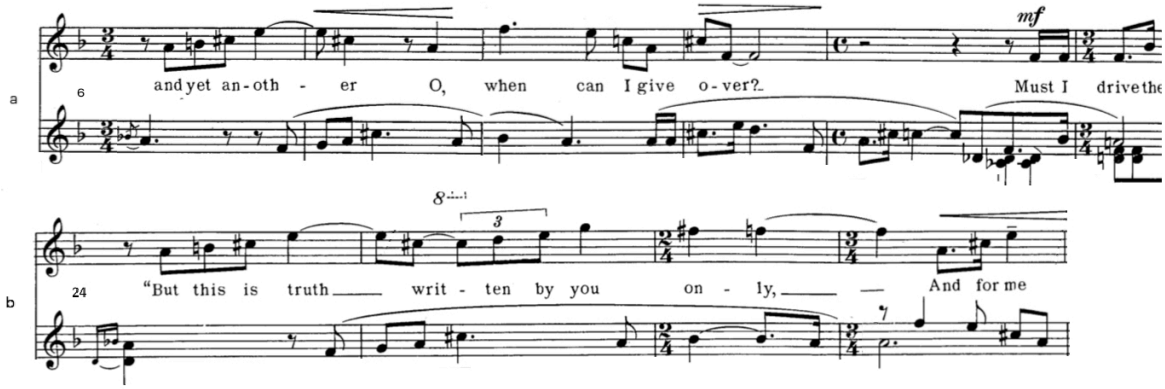
The severity of the suffering and desire to stop creating become unequivocal in the following lines. The protagonist ponders what price must be paid for the conclusion to come— "Must I drive the pen, until blood bursts from my nails / And my breath fails and I shake with fever"—from bloody fingers to suffocation and feverish tremors, the anguish escalates. The next line offers some relief: picturing an alternative to the misery, the lonesome writer speaks of a scenario where he would "sit well-wrapped in a many-coloured cloak," the colors of which, he goes on to specify, are results of the moonbeam refracted "through Castle Crystal." The music that underlies such relief is an augmented version of the same materials heard in the introduction to the song—the first two measure are each repeated, with only slight changes, while the third undergoes a more complicated treatment as the voice gives way to the piano interlude (mm. 20–21) in which the two hands take turns to depict the four-note motif over the meter change in m. 21 (Example 2.2). The markings, allarg. molto and diminuendo, together with the repeated four-note motif, allow a smoother arrival of the D minor tonality than the same materials did in the

introduction. The recapitulation of the melody with which the voice starts at the beginning of the song is now played by the piano instead (Example 2.3). The protagonist sings rather monotonously, wondering if his ultimate desires would be fulfilled—"Shall I never hear her whisper softly." The voice takes over the melody from the piano again and utters, enclosed within the quotation marks, the words that he is desperate to hear from her: "'But this is truth written by you only, / And for me only; therefore, love, have done'?" The design of using the same musical materials for the second half of the song seems to emulate the process of the realization of artistic inspiration—even before the "last song" is over, the cycle of inspiration and sufferings repeats itself.

Although the Muse is not mentioned by name in the poem, her presence is strongly felt in Barber's setting, notably in his design of the interaction between the voice and the piano. While the two are in unison at the beginning, they soon split into a duet in which they mirror each other's melodic contour (Example 2.4). Just as artistic impulses can take the form of internal conversations, the piano in m. 7 imitates the voice's entrance in m. 6, but takes the initiative in mm. 10–11, where the rhythmic figure mentioned earlier appears three times in quick succession.

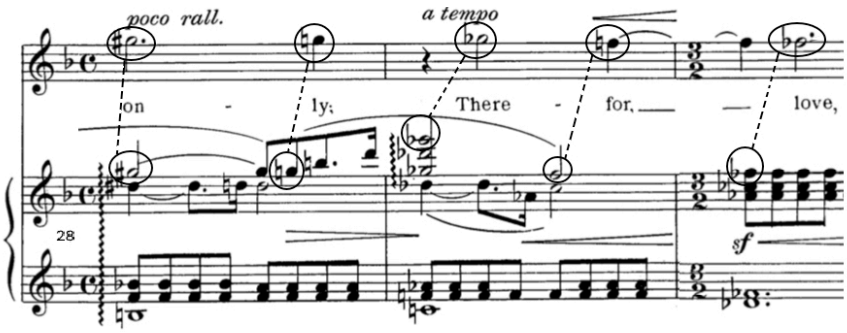


Example 2.3 "A Last Song," exchange of melody, a) mm. 4–5 and b) mm. 22–23

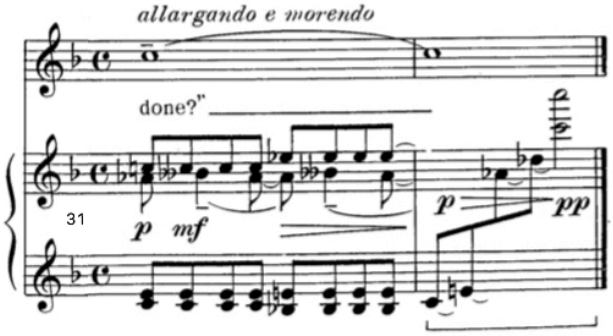


Example 2.4 "A Last Song," imitations between voice and piano, a) mm. 6–11 and b) 24–27

The exchange of voices at the recapitulation of the opening melody in m. 23, as mentioned above, depicts an image as though while he asks if he shall "never hear her whisper softly," the protagonist can hear the Muse's voice, the voice that gave him the inspiration at the beginning of the song. They then revert to canonic imitation until they converge, for the first time since the beginning unison, on the word "only." The synchronicity, however, is only temporary—even before the second syllable is uttered, the piano is already ahead of the voice. This anticipation continues as they descend chromatically from G-sharp to F-flat, on the words "...only: Therefore, love…" (Example 2.5). The ending measures of the song maintain the ambiguous tonality seen throughout the song—the *p–mf* as well as the tenuto markings that highlight the wiggling alto voice in the piano part in the penultimate measure is followed by an impression that the song would end in C, a key as remote to the predominantly D minor song as it can get, but not before being upset by the final open fourth interval of A-flat and D-flat (Example 2.6). Thus, "A Last Song" ends with the restatement of the harmonic language employed throughout the cycle: multiple tonality and quartal harmony.



Example 2.5 "A Last Song," mm. 28–30



Example 2.6 "A Last Song," mm. 31–32

"A Last Poem" is chronologically the latest amongst the three Graves poems set in this cycle. Reflecting on the nature of poetry writing, it can be read as the poet's lament on his fading inspirations, but it also reflects how his poetry examines the effect of his life-long preoccupation with the figure of the White Goddess. What appears to be the poet's lonesome struggle with his own mind and ideas turns out to be a battle with his Muse, who not only inspires and affirms but also demands. The quotation in the poem also gives the impression that she exists firmly, perhaps solely, in his head, alluding to the closed system of the poet's internal battle. Was he the victor? The fact that he still managed to finish "A Last Poem" seems to confirm his effort, but it remains unknown whether the Muse is satisfied. Barber's setting poignantly renders the uncertainty where while the act of reflecting on their relationship may satisfy her command to speak about the "truth," such accomplishment offers little comfort as her affirmation is underscored by his fear for her ultimate desertion.

"In the Wilderness"

Written in 1915, "In the Wilderness"[22] is one of Graves's earliest poems. Although it predated his White Goddess obsession, it foreshadowed the sense of intimate communion and devotion that followed. Dismissed by Graves himself as "a silly quaint poem,"[23] "In the Wilderness" is a retelling of Jesus's forty-day journey through the wilderness where, according to the Bible, he was tempted by Satan (The book of Mark 1:12–13). The poem was first published in his 1917 collection *Fairies and Fusiliers*,[24] the title of which reflects the poet's chief preoccupations at the time: his growing obsession with legends and the ongoing war, during which Graves served in the Third Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers. Although his Christian beliefs were challenged by the cruelty of the war, Jesus remained a figure of consolation and forgiveness for him. It probably also served as his coping mechanism for the environment fostered by his strict-minded mother, who inculcated in him the fear of eternal damnation. Graves became progressively less religious over the years, and as he grew increasingly negative towards organized Christianity, he began to see that "his mother's cruel religion would fit no system of reality"[25] and turned his attention to pagan gods. In spite of his rejection of Jesus, he went on to retell the biblical stories around Jesus in an unorthodox way in at least two of his works, the historical fictions *King Jesus* (1946) and *Jesus in Rome* (1957).

Graves removed "In the Wilderness" from his collections of poetry after its first inclusion in *Fairies and Fusiliers*, until he reinstated it in his *Collected Poems* (1947). Although it was indeed common for Graves to remove and destroy poems that no longer satisfied him, his anti-Christian sentiment was likely the chief reason in the case of this poem. His major qualm with Christianity concerns the figure of Jesus, whom he saw as "the antithesis of the genuine, the poetic hero: as patriarchal, fanatic rather than devoted—and terribly vulnerable to betrayal and deceit."[26] The

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[22] Graves, *Collected Poems, 1965*, 3.
[23] Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That* (London: Cassell, 1957), 25.
[24] Robert Graves, *Fairies and Fusiliers* (London: William Heinemann, 1917), 77.
[25] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 381.
[26] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 381.

reinstatement of "In the Wilderness" and its placement as the opening poem of his later collections, however, is proof of the poet's recognition for the figure of Christ, as he explains in his autobiography that "[t]he last thing that is discarded by Protestants when they reject religion all together is a vision of Christ as the perfect man. That persisted with me, sentimentally, for years."[27] However, this figure exists in the form of "his own invention," as shown by the poem's focus on the "wild animals" in the Bible's depiction of the journey rather than the figure of Christ himself. Graves received a letter in 1945, from a lady researching the subject of "Goats in History," inquiring about his source for the description of a goat accompanying Jesus in the wilderness. In reply, the poet admits that the scapegoat of his juvenile poem is his "own unhappiness' invention" and acknowledges the anachronism in the presence of the Azazel Scapegoat of Jerusalem in the Galilean wilderness of the Temptation.[28]

The thirty-line poem can be divided into three sections based on content. The first six lines are a brief description of the lonesome journey: a gentle but hungry and thirsty "he" walked in the wilderness and spoke "soft words of grace" to an attentive audience of "lost dessert-folk." The next section calls upon a wide range of creatures attending "his homilies": bittern, she-pelican, basilisk, cocatrice, and bats. Graves created his own version of the journey and took the liberty to interpret the "wild animals" specified in the bible into mythical creatures. Readers with some biblical knowledge would probably make the connection to Jesus's journey upon seeing the title, an impression that is gradually reinforced during the course of the poem—his "soft words of grace," the "communion," "piety," and "homilies."

The final ten lines introduces yet another animal: "The guileless young scapegoat." Unlike the monstrous creatures that sought Jesus's teaching ("Basilisk, cocatrice, / Flocked to his homilies"), the loyal scapegoat followed him despite its "Bleeding foot, burning throat." The scapegoat also stands as an outlier among the other wild animals for its lack of mythical connotation. Its relationship with Jesus is further differentiated in the very last line of the poem—"Tears like a lover wept"—Unlike the others who

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[27] Graves, *Goodbye to All That*, 15.
[28] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 382.

seek spiritual enlightenment from Jesus, the goat provides comfort and compassion, forming a kind of a role-reversal that elevates the goat, instead of Jesus, as the center of the poem.

Graves made a few changes to the poem before he reintroduced it into his canon. Likely in an effort to reduce its biblical connotation, the first word of the poem is now "He" instead of "Christ." This replacement of just one word removes the poem explicit association with the journey described in the bible until almost at the very end of the poem, where it is first alluded to in the length of the journey and eventually by name—"For forty nights and days / Followed in Jesus' way." Given the deviation from the Bible and his deliberate effort to make the fictitious scapegoat the focus of the story, the invocation of Jesus functions as a reference point that gives a background to the depiction of the innocent scapegoat rather than the subject of the story itself. Its loyal devotion and steadfastness to Jesus are made all the more poignant by the contrast between its human-like empathy and animal nature. Having built up an expectation that the poem is about Jesus's journey, the eventual appearance of the scapegoat heightens its role as the poem's hero—rather than singing the praise of Christ's obedience to the guidance of the Holy Spirit that led him "into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil," (The book of Matthew, 4:1) it is an ode to the selflessness and loving devotion of the goat, who subjects itself to sufferings.

Barber's setting of "In the Wilderness" demonstrates what Kreiling identifies as "an especially direct relationship between literary stimulus and musical response,"[29] which is particularly evident in the depiction of the mythical creatures. The song is loosely in the form of ABA', largely corresponding to the change of focus in the narrative outlined above. The three sections are differentiated by the change of accompaniment and rhythmic construction that correspond to the changes in the focus of the storytelling. Barber's use of musical language and formal design highlights the companionship between Jesus and the scapegoat, which in turn also contribute to the depiction of a different voice than the Muse in the previous song.

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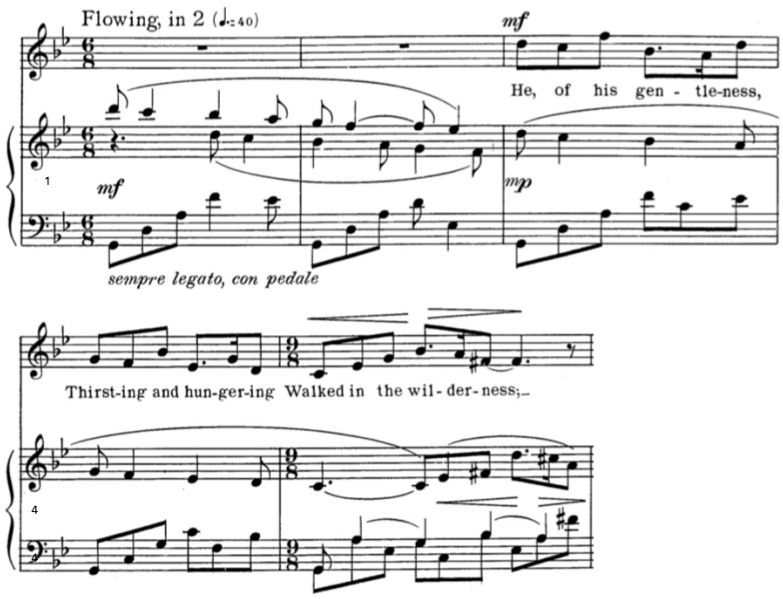
[29] Kreiling, "The Songs of Samuel Barber," 8.

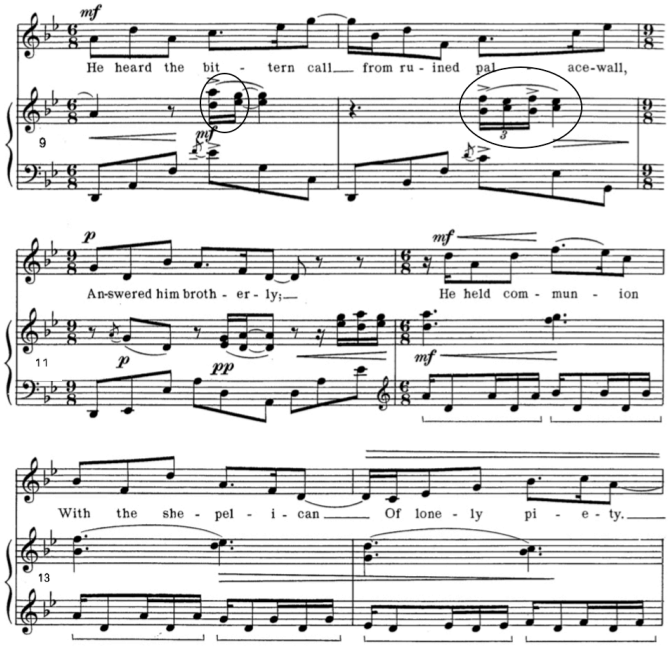


Example 2.7 "In the Wilderness," mm. 1–5

The sense of sadness and weariness permeating the song is evident even in the short introduction, thanks to the descending melodies on the right hand over wide-ranging intervals of the fifth on the left, giving the impression of effortful, taxing steps. The voice enters with an angular melody constructed mainly with intervals of the fourths and fifths, once again instilling the feeling of the underlying hardship that parallels the challenge faced by the singer in maintaining the smoothness entailed in "his gentleness." The persisting descending scale in the piano part maintains a general sense of weariness. The recurring two-note rhythmic figures of a short note followed by a long (♪♩) and vice versa (♩♪) work in tandem with the descending melody, referred to by Gibbons as the sigh motif, reinforcing the sense of sadness (Example 2.7).[30] As the wild animals are introduced, the music takes on a different mood: the two-note motif is compressed into accented 16th notes in the piano, imitating the bittern calls in mm. 9–11 (Example 2.8). Just as Jesus would have held his steps and stopped walking during a communion, the left hand of the piano switches from the wide-range leaps in the previous section to an oscillating figure

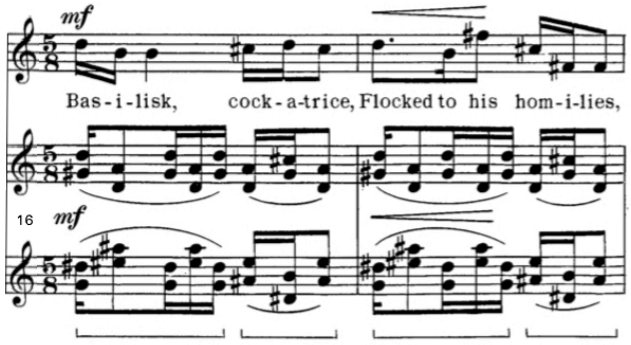
[30] Bruce Leslie Gibbons, "The Role of the Piano in Samuel Barber's *Despite and Still*" (DMA diss., Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College, 1987), 50.

stationed around the middle of the keyboard from m. 12, while the right hand plays an augmented version of the descending scale, achieving a similar effect of reduced motion.



Example 2.8 "In the Wilderness," mm. 9–14

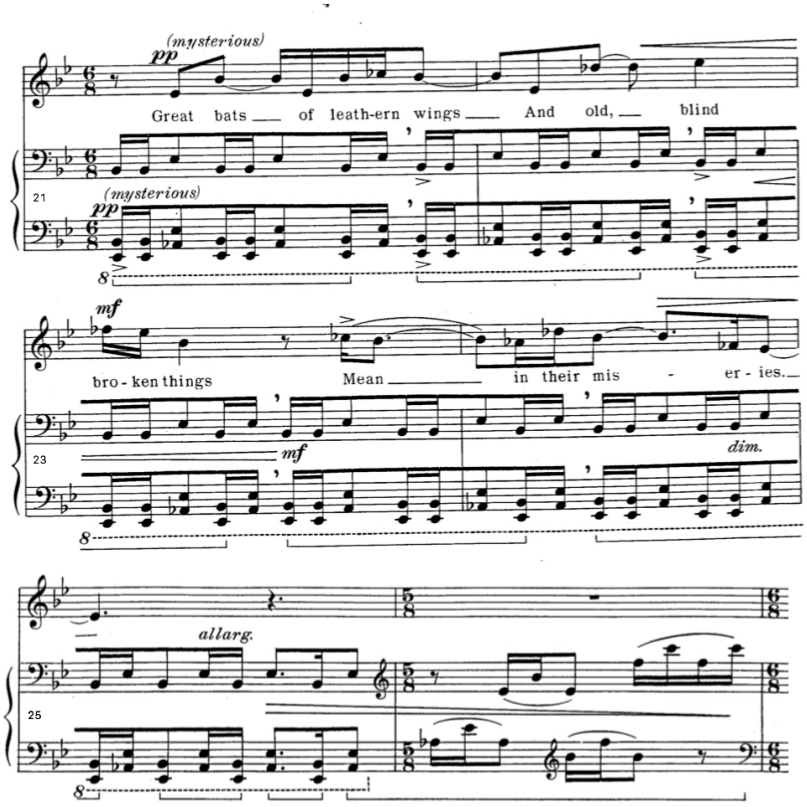
At the arrival of the monstrous creatures, the two hands join forces to play the same oscillating figure but with increasing tension established by a series of augmented and diminished intervals and increased speed. The otherworldliness of the imaginary beasts is portrayed in the meter, tonality, and sonority (Example 2.9). The change of meter from 6/8 into 5/8 in m. 16 leads to a change to the pattern of oscillating figure established in the accompaniment. The quartal harmony, also heard in "A Last Song," is featured prominently throughout the whole section, with the two hands often playing clashing chords that give rise to the fear brought about by the wild animals. Although the meter changes to 6/8 again as the text moves on to the bats at m. 21, the accompaniment figures are marked into groups of five beats, whereas the words are set in a way that varying beats would be emphasized to accommodate the natural stress of the speech (Example 2.10). The juxtaposition of meters adds to the mysteriousness, as hinted at by Barber's marking (m. 21) as well as the open harmony. The section concludes with an ascending tessitura that symbolizes the bats' departure.



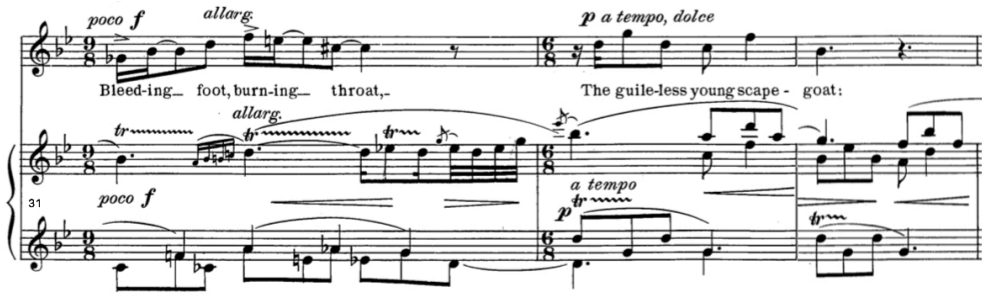
Example 2.9 "In the Wilderness," mm. 16–17

In the poem, the goat as the subject of the sentence is not introduced until the very end: "Then ever with him went, / Of all the wanderings / Comrade, with ragged coat, / Gaunt ribs—poor innocent— / Bleeding foot, burning throat, / The guileless *young scapegoat*" (emphasis mine). This means that it is not until m. 32 that the goat is revealed to the listener, who recalls at the return of A section the image of a weary Jesus treading in the desert. That the scapegoat appears at the return of A section at m. 27 firmly associates Jesus and the goat by virtue of the fact that they share the same musical materials. By setting the final section of the poem, one that pays exclusive attention to the scapegoat, to the same music that introduced Jesus at the beginning of the song, Barber creates a connection between Jesus and the goat as opposed to the musically distinct B section, in which the other creatures appear. The intimacy and unity between the two are reinforced by the same music that carries both the quiet sufferings of Jesus and the loyal following of the goat. If the steady pacing in the first A section symbolizes Jesus pacing in the wilderness, then the same "walking music" in the A' section, this time associated with the goat, suggests retrospectively the presence of the animal from the very beginning of the journey, that it has been by Jesus's side all along. The goat's presence is also reinforced by the melodic imitation in m. 5, which is further highlighted by the change of meter to 9/8 (Example 2.7). Anticipated by the underlying trills and a sudden change of dynamic level from forte to piano that symbolize the goat's suffering in m. 31, the eventual arrival of the fragile goat is expertly illustrated by the delicate turn of notes in a high tessitura

(Example 2.11). The postlude is peppered with the same figure of trills, ending the song with the hardship endured by the goat's undying loyalty in following Jesus's footsteps.



Example 2.10 "In the Wilderness," mm. 21–26



Example 2.11 "In the Wilderness," mm. 31–33

Graves's choice of subject matter, one that praises the goat's sacrifice as well as the virtues of loyalty and devotion instead of Jesus's resistance to temptation, is perhaps surprising, but his own remark about the origin of the inspiration may dismiss any doubt that the true hero of "In the Wilderness" is

indeed the innocent scapegoat. Within the pages of his library copy of *Over the Brazier* (1920), in which the poem appears, is Graves's own remark that the poem is "suggested curiously enough by the 3rd Bn R.W.F. [Third Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers] regimental Goat."[31] Even if Barber's setting does not champion the suffering scapegoat over Jesus, the two figures are at least on equal footing. In addition to the poem's superficial tie to the cycle's overarching theme of overcoming obstacles, it also speaks to another facet of the relationship between the artist and the Muse. If the Muse acquires an almost divine nature by virtue of her power to grant the poet the ability to represent truth in his work, then the Muse also demands loyalty and devotion from him, who follows in her ways through even the most treacherous terrains and obstacles.

This change of perspective in commenting on the relationship between the Muse and the poet takes another step in the next Graves poem in the cycle, "Despite and Still," in which the Muse becomes the poet's lover. The same sentiment is indeed anticipated at the end of "In the Wilderness," where the sorrow of the goat is compared with that of the lover's. This is, of course, not to say that Graves had intended such association in his poem—"In the Wilderness" predates his essay on the White Goddess, and even his relationship with his first Muse, Laura Riding, by decades. Instead, this interpretation constitutes a framework in which the poems in the cycle may function as an entity, one that is in line with the composer's personal resonance to the notion of the embodiment of a Muse figure.

[31] The Poetry Collection, The University at Buffalo/The Robert Graves Copyright Trust via *First World War Poetry Digital Archive*, accessed January 5, 2019, http://ww1lit.nsms.ox.ac.uk/ww1lit/collections/item/1072.

"Despite and Still"

Described by Seymour-Smith as Graves's "most serene" decade of his life thus far, the 1940s saw the poet's recovery from his awful ordeal under the care of his second wife Beryl.[32] The couple and their three children moved to Deià, Spain where he was sheltered from the scandals and the ongoing war that reminded him of his near-death experience. The rural community and the sense of serenity had an impact on his work. Many of the poems from that period are centered on the theme of overcoming difficulties and surviving hazards, which is supported by a sense of quiet conviction afforded by the rare domestic bliss in the Graves household. His *Collection of Poems (1938-45)* contains a number of his finest love poems that earned him the reputation as England's premier twentieth-century love poet, including "Despite and Still" (1942), alongside others such as "The Thieves" and "The Beast." The guilty lust that prevailed in his earlier poetry, as suggested by Seymour-Smith, was replaced by a sense of serenity that was undoubtedly granted by Beryl.[33] Riding's influence, however, by no means vanished. If anything, her shadows were to haunt Graves for years to come, but at least he was now able to internalize and distill his experience into his poetic theory of The White Goddess.

The yet uncertain outcome at the end of "Despite and Still" gives the poem "a peculiar poignancy."[34] The imploring tone that permeates the rest of the poem, coupled with the lack of resolution at the end, leaves one wondering if his prodding for the lover to remain constant and reject other lovers is heeded or not. Carter also points to the straightforward quality of the poem, and provides a succinct list of the sentiments touched upon:

> The appeal to their real, not imagined intimacy; the admission of how and why division has been wrought; the encouragement that all is not irretrievably lost; the full acknowledgement that the past cannot be undone; and the final urgent appeal not to throw all away by looking elsewhere.[35]

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[32] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 346.
[33] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 346.
[34] Carter, *Robert Graves*, 78.
[35] Carter, *Robert Graves*, 78–9.

Unlike love poems that praise and uphold love in its pure and chaste form, "Despite and Still" displays a remarkable sense of practicality and pragmatism, which runs parallel to the poet's relationship with Beryl, who stood by his side unobtrusively as he recovered from the emotional wounds inflicted by Riding's cruel treatment. His full recovery could only be found, Beryl knew well, in his ability to write again.

As Graves crystalized his relationship and interactions between himself, the poet, and his Muse, Riding, into the figure of the White Goddess, his poetry output gradually acquired a positive quality. While his fully fleshed-out White Goddess theory eventually led to his compulsive decisions to subject himself, time and again, to the cycle of sufferings caused in his abandonment by various muse-possessed women, his poetry during his peaceful years of domesticity shows an increased awareness of the two types of relationships he continued to have in the rest of his life. Beryl's unquestioning nature and loyal support, as opposed to the devastating consequences of his later association with other Muses, induced in him an understanding and conviction, one that he also acknowledged in 'The Thieves,' that a single-minded devotion between lovers is possible. Such sentiment is also the crux of 'Despite and Still,' that even if chance presents alternative love, the lovers would remain steadfast and refuse to defect. Indeed the poem is his "profoundest urges towards chastity and fidelity."[36]

The opening negative question of "Have you not read / The words in my head, / And I made part / Of your own heart?" suggests that the damage has already been done. The reader is left wondering whether the protagonist is asking in earnest if the lover knows what is on his mind, or if he is admonishing the other for the ignorance of his thought? If the sentiment with which the poem begins is ambivalent, the piano introduction to Barber's song is decidedly unequivocal. Both the unconventional markings of "darkly impassioned" and the repetitive figure played in a "hammered" manner in the two-measure introduction lend themselves to be a display of certitude, perhaps even anger. The heterophonic nature of the voices represented by the two hands establishes a sense of asynchrony between two similar voices. Never overlapping each other's motions, the two hands alternate and sustain the clashing pitches

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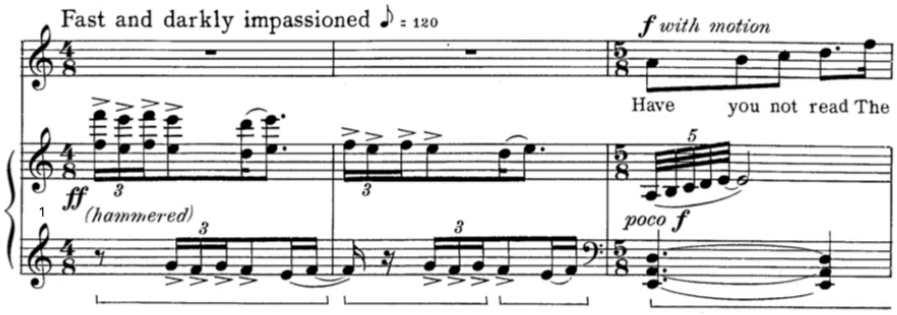
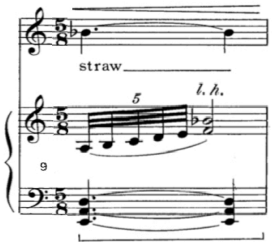
[36] Carter, *Robert Graves,* 78.

of E on the right hand and F on the left until an open chord appears in m. 3 and establishes the quartal harmony that underscores the rest of the song (Example 2.12).



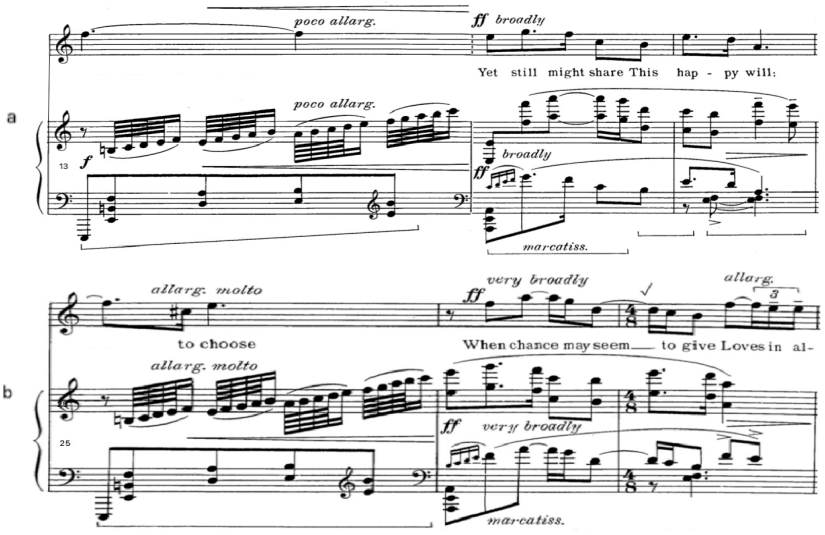
Example 2.12 "Despite and Still," mm. 1–3

Barber made two alterations to the poem—both involving the addition of the line "To love despite and still"—first as a repetition of the line 12 (mm. 19–20), then as a coda at the very end (mm. 29–33), thereby highlighting the importance of both the titles of the song and the cycle as well as the plea for conviction to overcome obstacles. The vocal melody is supported, for the majority of the time, by an accompaniment with a rolling five-note motif at the beginning of each measure, diminishing the impact of the strong downbeat that is articulated by the chords on the left hand (m. 3 in Example 2.12). From m. 9, the effect is furthered as the left hand crosses over to play on the second beat another chord of various forms of fourths and fifths, offsetting the stress of each measure to the second beat of the 5/8 meter, which does not conform to the usual stress patterns of either 2+3 or 3+2 (Example 2.13). The unusual stress patterns are echoed in the voice part, allowing the composer the flexibility to conform to the natural speech pattern of the irregular phrase length and rhyme scheme.

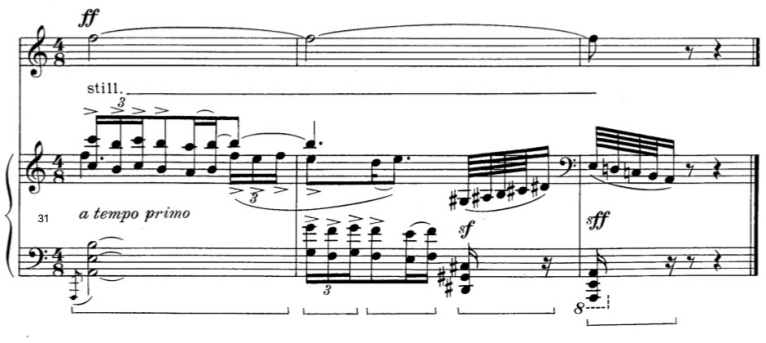


Example 2.13 "Despite and Still," m. 9

The accompaniment figure departs from the texture described above at two pivotal moments in the poem that highlight the appeal for conviction ("Yet still might share / This happy will" at mm. 14–15) and loyalty ("When chance may seem to give / Loves in alternative" mm. 26–27). The changes are prepared by a series of ascending five-note motifs that launches a duet of two independent melodies between the two hands of the piano, while the voice doubles the lower one (Example 2.14a). The musical materials are nearly identical for the second occurrence except for the exchange of voices between the two hands, which results in the voice taking up the other of the two melodies from the duet (Example 2.14b). The juxtaposition of the two melodies and the exchange of parts highlight the presence of two voices, one of the pleading protagonist and the other of his lover. The intertwining of the two distinct melodies and switching of voices point to the existence of the lover's voice in the protagonist's subconscious mind as he appeals for loyalty and faith. The postlude features the same materials as the beginning, hinting at the unresolved conflict. What follows shows Barber's ability to distill the idea of "despite and still" into musical terms. Supported by an open chord on the left hand, the right hand plays the ascending five-note motif in the key of G-sharp minor (Example 2.15). The resolution to this setup is a corresponding five-note motif that descend in the key of A minor, a semitone away from the previous unit, creating a strong tension between the tonal dissonance and marked sense of rhythmic finality.



Example 2.14 "Despite and Still," a) mm. 13–15 b) mm. 25–27



Example 2.15 "Despite and Still," mm. 31–33

The presence of a voice other than the protagonist's is by now a common feature of the cycle—the Muse's "voice" in "The Last Song," the scapegoat's footsteps in "In the Wilderness," and the lover's presence in "Despite and Still." The Muse figure that comes across as insatiable and unsympathetic at first transforms into a devoted companion and eventually assumes the most intimate role of an attentive lover. It is obvious that the order in which the three Graves poems appear in the cycle is not chronological, thus it follows that the reading put forth above is not inherent in his work. Having said that, the central position of the mechanics of poetic inspiration and by extension the Muse figure, whether materialized as the White Goddess or otherwise, are evident and well documented. That these three poems survived his consistent reevaluation to remain in his later poetry collections is also proof that they align with his philosophical framework.

The two remaining songs in the cycle, "My Lizard" and "Solitary Hotel," pose one of the biggest challenges in the examination of the cycle's unity due to their diverse authorships. Although the style and subject matter of Roethke's poem are drastically different from the Graves poems, the presence of another voice in "My Lizard" is evident. The final section of this chapter attempts to bring Barber's setting of Roethke's poem into the framework of meanings present in the Graves poems delineated above to see how the song joins the other three in depicting the various facets of the dynamic relationship between the artist and his Muse, one that bears personal significance to the composer as he faced challenges in his life and the relationship with his artistic partner.

"My Lizard"

The second song in *Despite and Still* sets Theodore Roethke's "Letter for a Young Wife" (1964).[37] Published along with the poet's other last poems in his posthumous collection entitled *The Far Field* (1964), the poem reflects the poet's acceptance of his mortality while committing to celebrate his wife's youth and life. Although he was ill for much of the five years during which he wrote the poems in this collection, his death at age fifty-five was unexpected. Nonetheless, his last years, as biographer Allan Seager contends, "seem to have a strange air of unconscious preparation."[38] The themes of love, death, and God remain prominent throughout his poetic output, and manifest themselves into versions of reconciliation and atonement. Roethke's poetry shows a strong sense of isolation and loneliness that is associated with the recognition of the vulnerability of life,[39] and at times served as a means through which he processed his thoughts, underlining the autobiographical nature of his work. As its title suggests, the poem addresses his wife, who is curiously referred to as "my lizard." What follows is a list of benedictions directed to her various attributes: her limbs, her eyes, and her hair. The poem maintains a positive outlook until the very end when the context of these well wishes is revealed: "When I am undone, / When I am no one." This final revelation turns what could well be a epithalamium dedicated to a new love into a senile poet's farewell to a young wife who would certainly outlive him, perhaps proving what Sullivan observes as "the fear of death which is stronger than love."[40]

The overwhelming presence of nostalgia points to the common themes shared by "Wish for a Young Wife" with the other Graves poems in the cycle. However, when asked by Philip Ramey if he has only little interest in setting modern or avant-garde poetry, Barber replied that he did "once use Theodore Roethke poems, but they were really not very near to me."[41] Perhaps the distance between himself and

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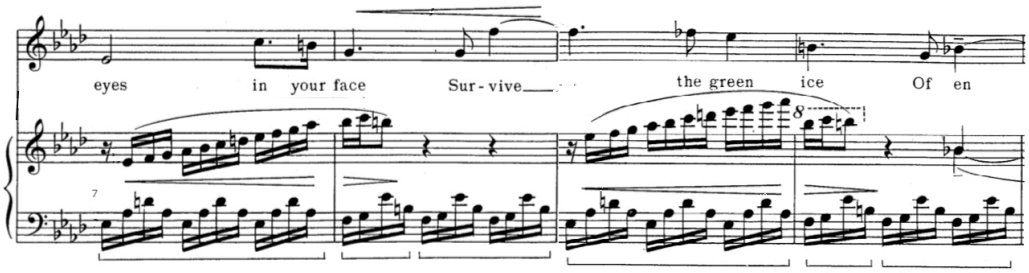
[37] Heyman states that Roethke had subtitled the poem "Wish for a young wife," (p. 466) which in fact is the poem's original title, instead of subtitle, when it was published in *The Far Field* (1964).
[38] Allan Seager, *The Glass House: The Life of Theodore Roethke.* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), 251.
[39] Rosemary Sullivan, *Theodore Roethke: The Garden Master.* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 171.
[40] Sullivan, *Theodore Roethke,* 172.
[41] Phillip Ramey, "Samuel Barber at Seventy: The Composer Talks About His Vocal Music," *Ovation* (March 1980), 19.

Roethke's work exists not so much in terms of subject matter as it does in its potential to be rendered in a musically satisfying manner. The song shares the tonal ambiguity prominent in the cycle—the accompaniment plays "altered versions of tonic and dominant harmonies" that obscures the A-flat major indicated by the key signature (Example 2.18a).[42] Kreiling also observes that the "strangely unsettled sonorities" in Barber's setting articulates only one facet of the poem, one that is eccentric and anxious, while the sense of beauty and poignance" is virtually discarded.[43] If the cycle indeed is Barber's examination of his creativity and relationship with the figures of a lover and a muse, then his "My Lizard" not only does not show a lack of consideration for the other characteristics of the poem, it is in fact reflective of his own circumstance regarding the disintegration of his relationship with Menotti. Although the two are of similar ages, the breaking down of their partnership, both personal and artistic, shares the poem's sentiments in invoking a sense of resignation.

Barber gave the song the new title, "My Lizard," while the original title of "Wish for a Young Wife" is altered to "Wish for a Young Love" and assigned instead as the song's subtitle. In doing so, he removed the gender-specific nature of the original poem. Once again, although the composer does not explicitly explain such edits, a young love as the addressee of the poem is more congruent to the intertwined identities of the lover and the Muse than would a young spouse, whose connection entails a sense of duty that is foreign to the framework established in the Graves poems. This minor change to the title, similar to the textual alterations made to the other poems, adds to the pertinence of these poems in his assimilation of the notion of creativity and his life.

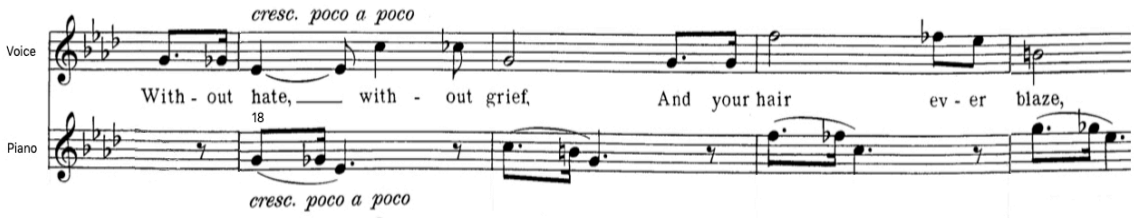
[42] Kreiling, "The Songs of Samuel Barber," 208.
[43] Kreiling, "The Songs of Samuel Barber," 209.



Example 2.16 "My Lizard," mm. 7–10

Similar to the continuous eighth notes in "The Last Song" that perhaps symbolizes the relentless ticking of time, the accompaniment of "My Lizard" mirrors the zigzag movements of the lizard in the protagonist's mind with a broken-chord figuration featured prominently throughout the song. "My Lizard" also features other text-painting devices: the E-flat major ascending scales in mm. 7–8 and 9–10 also emulate the reptile's fleeing movements, and the chromatic semitone descent at the end gives the impression of the lizard disappearing in a distance (Example 2.16). Kreiling suggests that the song is in a rough approximation of a modified strophic form (AA'), and points to the parallelism of lines 2 ("May your limbs never wither") and 6 ("May you live out your life"), where a set of melodies is cycled through twice followed by a third incomplete cycle (table reproduced below). Such design, in fact, has a larger impact on the interpretation of the song's meaning than a "musical compromise between symmetry and irregularity that parallels the literary effect of meditative continuity and idiosyncratic unity."[44] The imitation between the voice and the piano is similar to that in the Graves songs discussed in the previous chapter—the piano and the voice split at the end of m. 17 and take turns to articulate the same motif (Example 2.17).

[44] Kreiling, "The Songs of Samuel Barber," 207.



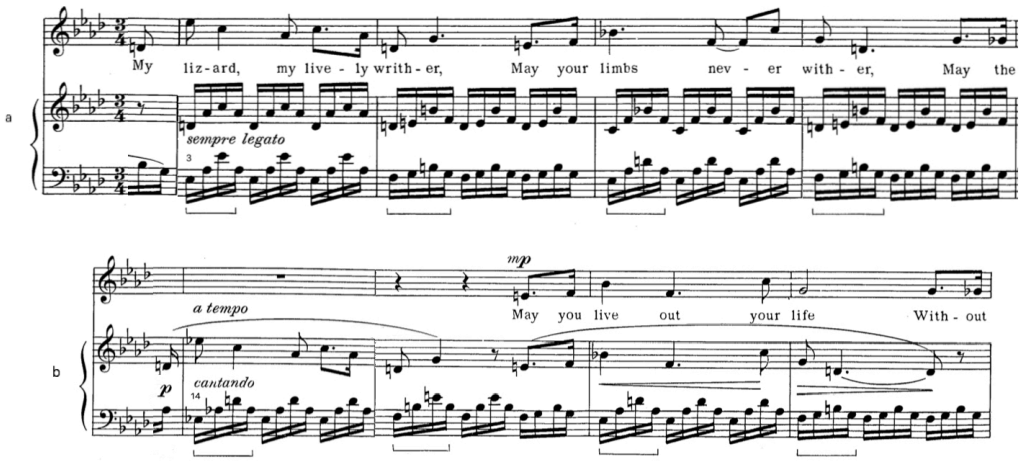
Example 2.17 "My Lizard," mm. 18–20 (voice and right hand of piano only)

The eleven-line poem contains an irregular rhyme scheme and no stanzaic division, which is set to an unusual formal structure. Discounting the first appearance in the two-measure introduction, the three appearances of melodic phrase "a" at mm. 3, 14, and 25, the last of which in a variation, do not correspond to the beginning of any poetic unit, both in terms of stanza and rhyme. Specifically, the occurrence at m. 14 in the piano interlude creates the illusion that the song is in some sort of strophic form, an impression that is contradicted as soon as the voice reenters in the next measure, this time continuing on with phrase "b" instead of restating phrase "a," as it does at the beginning of the song and would be expected in the case of a conventional strophic song (Example 2.18). The piano interlude (m. 14), therefore, displaces what is assumed to be the beginning of the "second strophe," and in effect takes the place of a restatement of the subject of the poem: "My Lizard, my lively writher." By taking up part of the melody, the piano part is unified with the voice and takes a more important role than merely an accompaniment.

Table 2.1 Phrase structure of "My Lizard" [45]

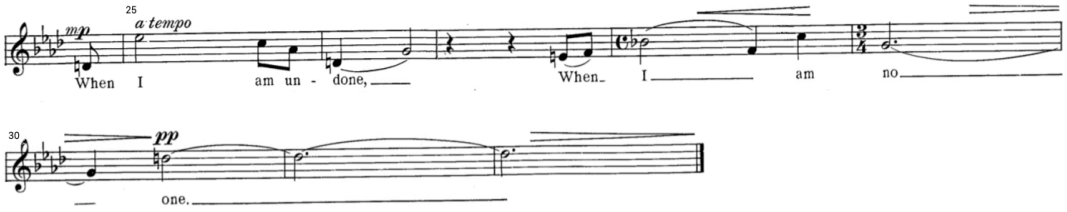
Poetic Line	Melodic Phrase
---	a (piano introduction)
1	a
2	b
3	c
4	d
5	e
---	a (piano interlude)
6	b'
7	c'
8	d'
9	e'
10	a'
11	b''

[45] Kreiling, "The Songs of Samuel Barber," 206.



Example 2.18 "My Lizard," a) mm. 3–6 and b) 14–17

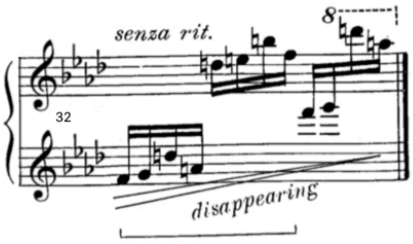
Following the two appearances of the cycle of phrases, the third at m. 25 aligns with the eventual revelation of the true nature of the text—an aging author's adieu (Example 2.18). The pseudo-strophic nature of the song's formal design builds up an expectation of more well wishes at the beginning of the third cycle, giving the ultimate revelation in the last two lines the focus and weight not afforded by the structure of the poem itself.



Example 2.19 "My Lizard," mm. 25–32 (voice only)

The lighthearted and jovial atmosphere is in stark contrast with the following revelation, one that foretells the eventual and ultimate separation—death. The nonchalant manner in which the conclusion, "when I am no one" is revealed is further enhanced by the inconclusive melody (b'') that ends with an inverted interval from the original downward fourth to an upward fifth (Example 2.19). The song ends on a diminuendo as the piano part moves up the tessitura, echoing the ascending scales from earlier in the song and anticipating the similar device in the depiction of the bats in "In the Wilderness." Marked with

"senza rit." and "disappearing," the ending offers one final portrayal of the elusive creature (Example 2.20).



Example 2.20 "My Lizard," m. 32

❖❖❖❖❖

The preceding discussion of the interaction and relationship between the piano and the voice in the various songs in the cycle alludes to the presence of the many manifestations of a multi-faceted figure, all of which played an important role in Barber's creative journey: the Muse in "A Last Song," the partner who will be left behind when the artist succumbs to old age in "My Lizard,' the guardian to Jesus's lonesome journey in "In the Wilderness," and the uncertain lover in "Despite and Still." Barber's sensitive setting gives voice to the otherwise understated Muse, the disciple, the guardian, and the lover. In particular, the design of melodic imitations between the voice and the piano, formal structure, as well as the use of motifs all invite the listeners to pay heed to the "silent" characters. While these characters exist in the imagination of the poet, as the source of his affirmation, the subject of an old man's well wishes, the silent companion of Jesus, and the uncertain listener of a lover's plea, their presence in the music, often in the accompaniment to interact with the voice, deepens the meanings of the poems and intensifies the relationships depicted.

The complex relationship between an artist and his Muse also goes through an evolution in which their spiritual distance diminishes as the songs progress. In "A Last Poem," "she" speaks through the poet both figuratively in the form of the poem itself as the product of her inspiration and literally in the whispered affirmation imagined by the poet. The Muse remains in a distance and what she says exists

only in his imagination. “My Lizard” highlights the amorous relationship between the protagonist and the young love. While the storytelling nature of “In the Wilderness” does not lend itself to allowing the goat a voice, its presence is keenly felt in the vivid description of its physicality. Although not introduced until the end of the poem, its companionship throughout the poem is retrospectively implied and its fictitious nature is mitigated by its existence in the same space as Jesus. “Despite and Still” is an exclusive address to the lover; although she is, once again, silent, her character is illustrated in her relationship with the protagonist through the rationale of his plea. One also senses the importance of love throughout all four poems—the primary role of this hidden voice takes on a variety of roles from the divine source of inspiration, to the object of endless praises, a loyal companion who witnesses his sufferings, and finally a partner in earthly love.

Chapter 3: BARBER'S DEFIANT ORIGINALITY

To many listeners, "Solitary Hotel" is the most controversial number in the cycle. The text set in "Solitary Hotel" is an excerpt from the seventeenth episode, the Ithaca Chapter, of Joyce's seminal novel, *Ulysses* (1922). The novel is loosely modeled on Homer's *Odyssey* and each episode is governed by a single writing technique. The Ithaca episode is written in the style of catechism, which finds its origins as a Christian manual of instruction arranged in the form of questions-and-answers. The passage in question elucidates the content of a conversation between Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom in which they discuss the effectiveness of various promotional ideas for a stationery store.

Readers familiar with the novel would recall that this discussion refers to an advertising idea suggested by Bloom in a previous episode for Wisdom Hely's stationery store, which involves "a transparent show cart with two smart girls sitting inside writing letters, copybooks, envelops, blotting paper."[1] The excerpt set in "Solitary Hotel" features a discussion between Stephen and Bloom, in which their concepts are compared for their effectiveness. The discussion starts with a recount of Bloom's idea, followed by Stephen's, which is quoted below with the text set by Barber in italics:

> Which example did he adduce to induce Stephen to deduce that originality, though producing its own reward, does not invariably conduce to success?
>
> His own ideated and rejected project of an illuminated show cart, drawn by a beast of burden, in which two smartly dressed girls were to be seated engaged in writing.
>
> What suggested scene was then constructed by Stephen?
>
> *Solitary hotel in mountain pass. Autumn. Twilight. Fire lit. In dark corner young man seated. Young woman enters. Restless. Solitary. She sits. She goes to window. She stands. She sits. Twilight. She thinks. On solitary hotel paper she writes. She thinks. She writes. She sighs. Wheels and hoofs. She hurries out. He comes from his dark corner. He seizes solitary paper. He holds it towards fire. Twilight. He reads. Solitary.*
>
> *What?*

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[1] Joyce, James, *Ulysses* (Paris: Shakespeare & Co. 1922), 147.

In sloping, upright and backhands: Queen's Hotel, Queen's Hotel, Queen's Hotel. Queen's Ho... [2]

The excerpt poses even more significant challenges to the understanding of the cycle than the surrealistic subject of Roethke's poem. In terms of subject matter, it is an even wider stretch for the listener to associate the song with the few recurring themes found throughout the cycle. The lack of direct contact between the two characters perhaps hints at the sense of isolation and misunderstanding. Other than that, every attempt to associate the text with the other themes seen in the cycle is met with ambivalence. First of all, in naming the song "Solitary Hotel," Barber doubles-down on the unlikely name for a hotel. However, both the lack of upper-case letters as well as the excerpt's syntax point to the phrase's designation of an unspecified lonesome hotel—the word "solitary" appears another two times, both as one-word phrases, do so as an adjective. Whichever way a listener takes the phrase to mean, the message scribbled on the paper—"Queen's Hotel"—leads to yet more questions: Is it her next destination or is it the name of the lonesome hotel they are in currently? Is she mindlessly doodling or is she leaving instructions behind for a future rendezvous?

Nor does the rest of the excerpt give more contexts for solving the riddle—in fact even more questions arise. After a short phrase that sets up the scene by providing the location of the events to come, a series of terse descriptions continues the bare-bone depiction. Having indicated the time of the year and day, the focus shifts to the interior of the "firelit" room in the hotel, recounting a curious encounter between a "young man" and a "young woman." Did the two know each other previously? Why does she sigh as she writes on the paper? Where is she headed to in such a hurried manner? Did she notice him in the room?

The nameless characters and absence of any qualifiers give the impression that the passage is some sort of stage directions in a movie script. The scene is, as evaluated by Knowles in his monograph on the musicality of Joyce's work, "vibrant, condensed, shaping to a fine pitch the plodding suspense that

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[2] Joyce, *Ulysses*, 637.

Bloom's ox-drawn cart is intended to provide."[3] Thus, the significance of the myriad of questions above does not lie within the narrative of the novel itself; rather, what matters is the level of curiosity aroused.

The use of questions in this episode, by definition a prominent feature of catechism, serves to magnify the sense of curiosity that Bloom invokes as his chief tool to attract and sustain attention in his imagined scenario. This same sense of curiosity is built in the reader as the mystery grows during the scene. A brief moment of relief, however, comes at the question of "What?" which gives the prospect of some answers. In a way, the questioning voice, in the context of the novel, represents the voice of the reader and thus the episode guides the reader through a series of concepts without drawing on a linear chronology.

The ingenuity in a scene such as this lies in the balance between specificity and intrigue. The more specific a description is, the less room it leaves for the mind to create the scene, thereby diminishing the element of allure. On the other hand, overly sparse characterization deprives the mind of the necessary details that fuel its imagination. The nameless characters and their non-descriptive actions, which prescribe the activities but not the manner in which they are executed, strike the perfect balance where one would be confused enough to be drawn to solving the 'puzzle' but not too confounded as to losing interest altogether. Joyce admits that in writing *Ulysses,* he has "put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries" and more importantly, that it is "the only way of insuring one's immortality."[4] This is indeed only one of many James Joyce's advertising geniuses.[5] From his conception of what could be the first-ever commercial jingle in the "Circe" episode to the discussion about advertisement in the "Lestrygonians" episode, more than a hundred instances of references to ads are scattered throughout *Ulysses*, of which the excerpt in question is one.

In the context of the novel, the "Solitary Hotel" excerpt makes reference to the suicide of Bloom's father, an event that happened at Queen's Hotel earlier in the novel. The excerpt is followed by a

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[3] Sebastian D. G. Knowles, "Opus Posthumous: James Joyce, Gottfried Keller, Othmar Schoech, and Samuel Barber," in *Bronze by Gold: The Music of Joyce*, ed. Sebastian D. G. Knowles (New York: Garland Pub.,1999), 132.
[4] Joyce's reply to a request for a plan of *Ulysses*, quoted in William Chance, "Joyce and the Professors" in *James Joyce*: *The Centennial Symposium*, ed. Morris Beja et. al. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 3.
[5] Alfred Paul Berger, "James Joyce, Adman." *James Joyce Quarterly* 3, no. 1 (1965), 25–33.

clarification of whether the homonymity of the hotel is a mere coincidence.[6] While this piece of information does not solve the riddles of the motivation behind as well as the manner in which "Queen's Hotel" is scribbled on the piece of paper, it at least provides some relief to the readers in regards to the scene's relevance to the rest of the novel. Listeners of Barber's song, however, are not granted the same peripheral knowledge—"Solitary Hotel" is in complete isolation of any sort of network of meanings within the cycle.

Catechism found its way into the writing of instructional manuals during the sixteenth century, where readers are guided to understand and explore different aspects of a topic. When applied to a narrative, the technique of catechism takes sequentiality out of the storytelling; instead, it induces the reader to deduce the sequence of events based on the questions and answers provided. It is no coincidence that the concepts of induction and adduction are featured at the center of the episode written in the style that requires the readers' very same skills. These concepts are in fact invoked in the question that precedes the texts set in "Solitary Hotel": "Which example did he adduce to induce Stephen to deduce that originality, though producing its own reward, does not invariably conduce to success?" Quoting the same passage, Heyman remarks that it "would have been of great interest to the composer who believed his *Antony and Cleopatra* to be unappreciated."[7] Indeed, whilst it might be an exaggeration to blame Barber's troubled mind on a single "failure," Joyce's question likely resonates with the composer's introspection of his creativity. Central to the question posed is the complex idea of "originality." The definitions of the word "originality" in the *Oxford English Dictionary* highlights two distinct aspects of the notion: "independent exercise of one's creative faculties" on the one hand and "the quality of being independent of and different from anything that has gone before" on the other.[8] The first definition of "originality" focuses on the artist's independent creative thoughts, endorsing endeavors that conform to nothing but the artist's own ideas. In other words, the internal thoughts of the artist are of prime

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[6] Joyce, *Ulysses*, 637.
[7] Heyman, *Samuel Barber*, 468.
[8] "Originality, n." OED Online, Oxford University Press, December 2018, www.oed.com/view/Entry/132565. Accessed 15 October 2018.

importance, thus whether or not the product aligns with its surrounding trends neither enhances nor impedes the work's originality. The other definition, however, differs in its stipulation of independence from "anything that has gone before." The addition of a temporal constraint narrows down the pool of possible works that warrant the label of "originality" to only those that surpass what came before. A work that is the product of a composer's independent thought, hence meeting the criteria of the first definition, would not qualify as "original" in this other definition unless it is also different from everything that precedes it. That is to say, the creator now bears the extra burden of breaking away from traditions.

These somewhat contradicting definitions form the basis of what McFarland calls the "originality paradox," which encapsulates two sets of separate but related relationships—an individual artist with, on the one hand, his peers, and on the other, tradition.[9] The common denominator of the paradox is the individual, championed by Romanticism as the isolated ego, which led to the challenge for artists to tread the fine line between individuality and communality. McFarland observes that the problem of "individual and group is always perceived as a lateral relationship, occupying a common temporal plane," while the problem of "individual and tradition, conversely, always is perceived as a vertical effect in time,"[10] echoing the duality in the two definitions that embody the two facets of the struggles over the role of creativity in music compositions.

For composers, there seems to be no escaping from this paradox. As a cohort of composers collectively advance and expand musical language and techniques, they also strive to maintain their independent creative voices. Indeed, it has always been as important to stand out amongst one's peers as it is to break pre-existing boundaries. Amidst the rise of international new music, starting from Schoenberg at the beginning of the century to the post-World War II experimentalists such as Luciano Berio (1925–2003) and Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928–2007), Barber was at the crossroads where he could either remain loyal to his own approach to vocal music, one that prizes the expressivity of the texts above anything else, or be part of the vogue of new music with which he fundamentally disagreed. His struggle

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[9] Thomas McFarland, *Originality & Imagination (*Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 3.
[10] McFarland, *Originality & Imagination*, 3.

is indeed right in the middle of the paradox—on the one hand, he maintained his independent artistic voice by not assimilating innovative compositional techniques set forth by his peers; on the other hand, his continuation of the Romantic lineage of song-writing style with regards to melodic and harmonic treatments as well as text-setting amounts to a style that conforms to tradition. That Barber achieved "originality" in the first sense of the word while he was more often than not evaluated according to the second definition of the term is evident in many of the commentaries of his music. When asked if he has "ever been tempted to explore some of the more avant-garde sonorities and styles, the composer grudgingly replied: "Do you mean 'why haven't I changed?' Why should I?"[11]

Many of Barber's songs share the aesthetics of Romantic composers of the Germanic tradition, which is perhaps the result of his training from Rosario Scalero (1870–1954) at Curtis. Their approach in lieder compositions, one that strove for a sense of parallelism between music and texts, is also notable in Barber's vocal composition. Nathan Broder, one of Barber's first biographers, divides Barber's musical style into two periods and asserts that the year 1939 marks the composer's departure from traditional procedures to "methods that can only have arisen in the musical climate of our time."[12] However, Barber stands out from the others, as Heyman clarifies, since he employed elements of modernist language only "insofar as they allowed him to pursue without compromise principles of tonality and lyrical expression.[13] This once again points to Barber's priority in upholding the imperative goal for a musical setting to achieve a lyrical expression called upon by the texts. This principle does not bode well with the later shift of priority to pure musical concerns found in techniques such as dodecaphonicism. Barber once commented on the limitations of such techniques that it might be "good for expressing neurotic emotions. But I've never heard of a successful "happy" twelve-tone song."[14] Indeed, since the order of notes in the melody is largely dictated by a sequence that is predetermined, such "precisely ordered musical system

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[11] Barber, "Samuel Barber Interviewed by Allan Kozinn (1979)" in *Barber Remembered: A Centenary Tribute,* ed. Peter Dickinson (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2010), 51.
[12] Nathan Broder, *Samuel Barber* (New York: Schirmer, 1954), 47.
[13] Heyman, *Samuel Barber,* 512.
[14] Ramey, "Samuel Barber at Seventy," 19.

might entail a limited tolerance for the varying literary demands of texts."[15] Instead, although he embraced some of the new compositional techniques, the vital role of lyrical expression has always been his first and foremost concerns. In other words, the "increased dissonance, chromaticism, tonal ambiguity, and limited serialism" evident in his later work were all governed by his primary goal of giving the texts the most appropriate musical expression. Barber himself acknowledges the higher level of dissonance in both *Despite and Still* and his later Op. 45 was employed in order to best illustrate the texts.[16] The rift, if one can call it that, between Barber and his contemporary in terms of modernist techniques, is rooted not so much in the difference between their technical approaches as the underlying philosophies of vocal composition. In keeping the texts as the champion of a song, he refused to align with those who were driven primarily by the desire to be different for the sake of being different, which he branded "a sense of desperation that is not too fortunate."[17]

Barber was overlooked by critics of his time who compared his compositional style with the contemporary new trends due to his relative conservatism. What was amiss is that his neo-lyricism and attention to musicopoetic relationship are not proof of his dependence on and inability to break free from traditions; instead, they point to his independent artistic sensitivity on how the texts can be best served by the music. Barber explains his approach to songs in his interview with Ramey: "[m]y songs, like lieder, tend to highlight the texts," and he also strives "not to distort the natural rhythms of a poem."[18] In any case, the choice was an easy one for Barber, as he protests that "[t]here's no reason music should be difficult for an audience to understand, is there?"[19] Indeed, the Romantic phenomenon encapsulated the battle between a sense of perpetual innovations, as identified by Jacques Barzun, and the notion of inclusiveness, where both experience and tradition were cherished.[20]

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[15] Kreiling, "The Songs of Samuel Barber," 3.
[16] Ramey, "Samuel Barber at Seventy," 18–9.
[17] Barber, "Samuel Barber Interviewed by Robert Sherman (1978)," 41.
[18] Ramey, "Samuel Barber at Seventy," 19.
[19] Barber, "Samuel Barber Interviewed by Allan Kozinn (1979)," 51.
[20] Jacques Barzun, *Berlioz and the Romantic Century,* vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press), 389.

Taking into consideration the composer's lifelong disagreement with his colleagues and critics, the issues of "originality" hinted at in the excerpt from *Ulysses* was probably more deep-set than merely the so-called failure of *Antony and Cleopatra*, as Heyman's passing comment mentioned above would suggest.[21] Beyond protesting the frivolous spectacle and innovative staging that Zeffirelli insisted upon the eventually ill-received *Antony and Cleopatra* is Barber's lifelong defiance in upholding his idiosyncratic approach that did not conform to his peers' innovation. Thus, perhaps in response to Joyce's question, pioneering new compositional techniques, as proven by the works of Copland (1900–90) and Ives (1874–1954), does indeed produce "its own reward," but they do not necessarily "conduce to success," or so Barber believed in the case of his own works. Instead, the composer consciously took what was considered a "moderate" approach—"I can only say that I myself wrote always as I wished—as I wanted to for myself—without a tremendous desire to find the latest thing possible."[22]

"Solitary Hotel"

Barber set in total ten texts by James Joyce, including the three poems from *Chamber Music* that were previously unpublished. If Barber's use of musical language in "My Lizard" shows an obvious link to the reptile's movements and physicality, then his choices for *Solitary Hotel* are decidedly nebulous. The short length of most of the lines makes the already uncommon decision to set prose instead of poetry even more unusual. Prose is an uncommon choice for song composers for a number of reasons. To begin with, the irregular phrase length does not lend itself to the construction of musical phrases and affects the prosody in terms of the alignment of accents and stressed syllables or important words. Given the fact that the excerpt is taken out of context from the original novel, Kreiling contends that it "can only be regarded as an intriguing but incomplete narration in a curiously flat style—a strange choice for a song text."[23] Such "strange choice," unsurprisingly, begot an equally idiosyncratic treatment from Barber.

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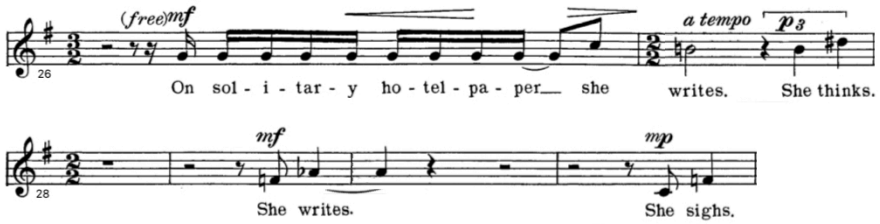
[21] Heyman, *Samuel Barber*, 462.
[22] Barber, "Samuel Barber Interviewed by Robert Sherman (1978)," 41.
[23] Kreiling, "The Songs of Samuel Barber," 140.

Different from the other songs in the cycle, the music of *Solitary Hotel* takes after a standard song type, which borrows from a slow tango, making it the only song with a dance form. It is not uncommon for vocal music to borrow from dance—the well-known aria from Bizet's opera *Carmen*, "*Séguédille*," which is named after the eponymous dance is a prime example. The aria borrows from the dance the rhythm and figuration in the accompaniment, on top of which the voice adds a melody. Barber's song differs, however, in that the two hands of the piano accompaniment constitute a musically complete unit, whereas the voice, assuming a less important role, interjects with phrases bearing limited melodic interests—unlike Bizet's vocal melody, which is integrated with the piano accompaniment into a unified whole. Thus, it belongs to the groups of songs that champion the piano part while the voice takes on a secondary role and provides a kind of a commentary, such as Hahn's *L'heure exquise* (1890) and Strauss's *Morgen!* (1894).

The song's association with the tango is evident both in his use of the ostinato rhythm associated with the tango as well as his tempo marking of "Like a rather fast tango in 2." The dance originated in the bars and brothels of Argentina and Uruguay, which led to the pessimistic lyrics in the related genre of tango-songs, many of which are overly dramatic and ill-humored. Barber choice of this dance form was probably driven by his observation of the related sentiments of fatalism and disappointment in the texts, which displays a keen sense of despair and isolation despite a lack of a concrete narrative. The word "solitary" appear five times in the short passage, while the event at the center of the narrative, the encounter between "he" and "she," turns out to be confusing and fruitless. In choosing a partner dance as the musical medium, Barber also sets up an expectation for the intimacy between them, making the disappointment of the lack of such intimacy at the end all the more poignant. Despite the absence of an explicit romantic association, the choice of musical language invites the listeners to view the puzzling text as a romantic intrigue.



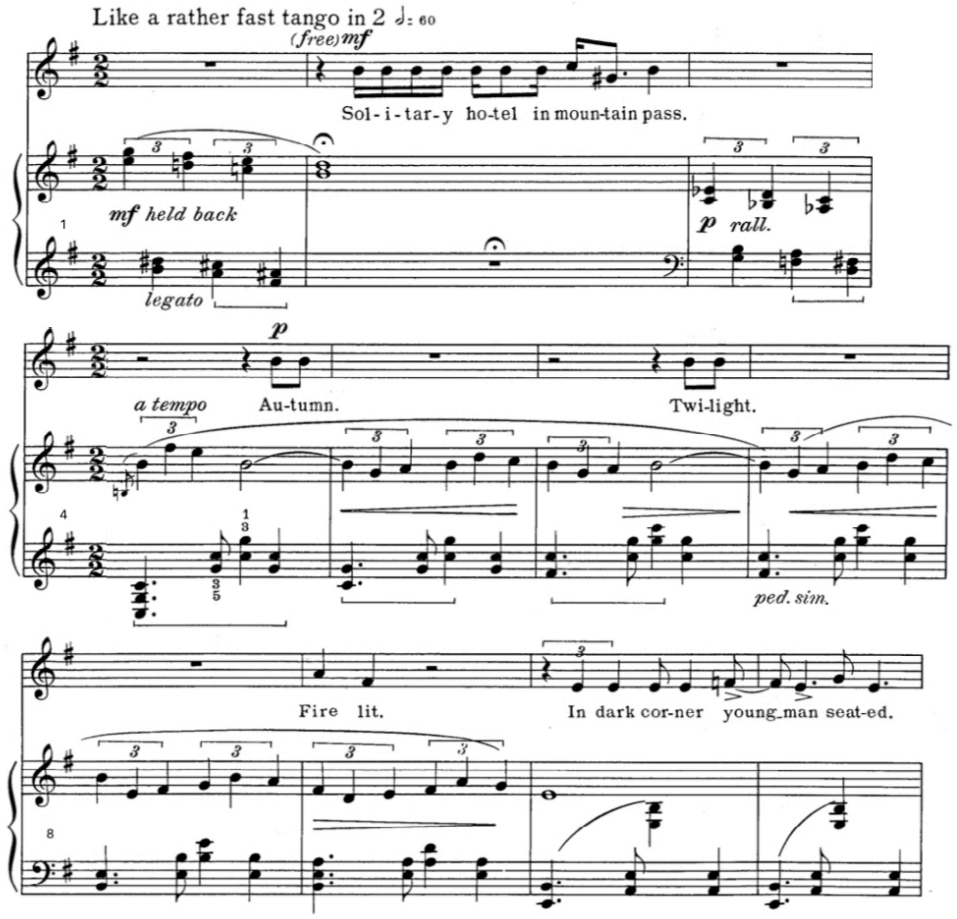
Example 3.1 "Solitary Hotel," mm. 26–31 (voice only)

The lack of Barber's signature vocal lyricism is also explained by the short length of the phrases in the original text, which are set in a declamatory style that is exclusively syllabic with many repeated notes and mostly narrow intervals of seconds or thirds, with the occasional fourths and fifths that are prevalent throughout the cycle (Example 3.1). The declamatory vocal line and the melodic piano part rarely overlap and even when they do, they do not form a coherent unit in terms of melodic development. Kreiling conjectures that the deprivation of vocalism is the composer's response to Joyce's chosen style for the episode.[24] The impersonal nature of catechism is, as Lawrence points out, Joyce's concerted effort "to dispense with most of the beauties of literary style."[25] Indeed, as Joyce justifies his choice of catechism for the episode, he also explains his intention that "the reader will know everything and know it in the baldest coldest way,"[26] which is congruent to the straightforwardness detected in the passage.

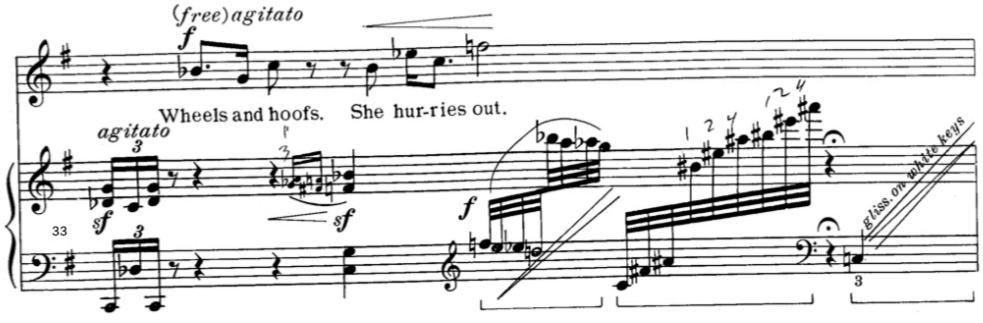
The piano introduction begins with a series of jagged thirds, followed by the recitative-like vocal line that provides the premise of the song: "Solitary hotel in mountain pass." This is followed by another series of thirds, this time over a rallentando, before the piano launches into the main section of the song in m. 4. The most striking element of this song as discussed above, is its resemblance to a tango, which is evident in the ostinato rhythm and a colorful melody of the piano part (Example 3.2). However, the song does not take after the common two-section form of the tango, and that each musical phrase varies in length. With the exception of the one in m. 20, each phrase begins with the same motif (see right hand of

[24] Kreiling, "The Songs of Samuel Barber," 141.
[25] Karen R. Lawrence, "Style and Narrative in the 'Ithaca' Chapter of Joyce's *Ulysses*," *English Literary History* 47 (1980), 559–60.
[26] Joyce's letter to Frank Budgen in Lawrence, *The Odyssey of Style In Ulysses* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981), 181.

m. 4 in Example 3.2) and contains various numbers of units of triplets that articulate the swirling movements—one can almost imagine the dancing motions of the fingers on the piano (mm. 4–10).

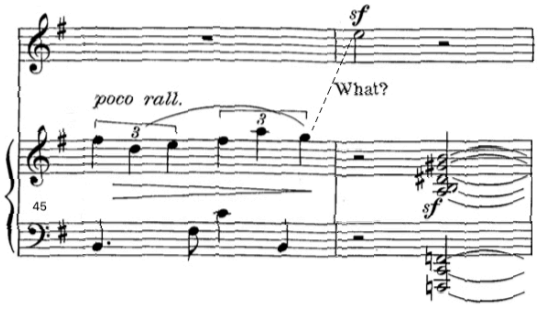


Example 3.2 "Solitary Hotel," mm. 1–11

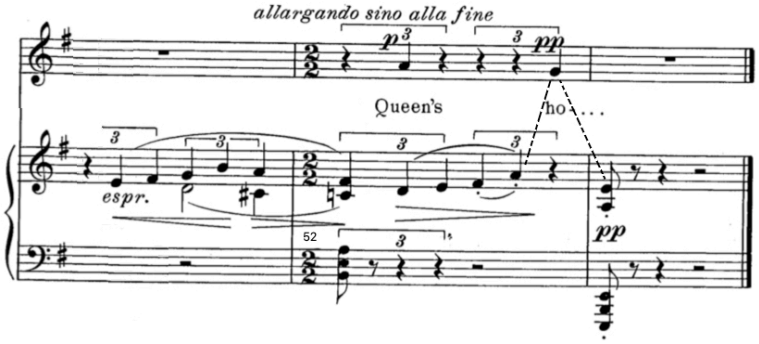


Example 3.3 "Solitary Hotel," m. 33

Barber indicates “free” or “freely” on three occasions; these include the opening line, the announcement of the arrival of the horse cart and her departure (m. 33), and the description of the handwriting towards the end (m. 47). This prescription highlights the declamatory style of the vocal line, which in turn reinforces the voice’s role as a narrator/commentator. Not only does this correspond to the catechistic style and the movie script nature of the scene, it also creates a contrast with the heavily romantic connotation highlighted in the music. Adding to the dramatic quality of the song that is atypical of the cycle, the interruption of the horse cart is mirrored in the music (Example 3.3). Another dramatic interruption takes place when the voice asks “What?” in m. 46 (Example 3.4), highlighting the change of voice from answering to questioning. Although the voice sings the pitch (E), which takes over the last note of the “tango melody,” the element of surprise is achieved by the dynamic marking of sforzando. The same happens again at the end of the song when the voice fills in for the missing penultimate note (G) in the melody brought by the piano in m. 51, which echoes the fragmented nature of the message scribbled “in sloping, upright and backhands” (Example 3.5).



Example 3.4 “Solitary Hotel,” mm. 45–46



Example 3.5 “Solitary Hotel,” mm. 52–53

If Joyce's strategy is to capitalize on curiosity, as he contends that "smart girls writing something catch the eye at once" so everyone would be "dying to know what she's writing,"[27] then "Solitary Hotel" might be Barber's take on the same antics—just as Joyce's scene thrives on the questions it evokes, the cycle intrigues with the wonders it elicits. Given his track record of humor and wit, Barber's musical choice of an intimate dance form for an amorous encounter ending with a curiously scribbled name of a random hotel is perhaps his way to "keep *musicologists* busy for centuries." But more importantly, the composer challenges the common approach of text and musical choices for song compositions. Both the musical setting of "Solitary Hotel" and its inclusion in the cycle highlight and reinforce the crux of Joyce's scene—unresolved riddles that feed both *on* and *into* curiosity. If Barber was going through a trying time with his musical creativity as he composed *Despite and Still*, then "Solitary Hotel" might have served as his manifesto for the multitude of meanings conveyed in a piece of music where uncertainty, or a lack of certain qualities, not only does not necessarily impede the value of the work, but could even add to it by virtue of the questions induced.

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Despite and Still comprises a first-person account of an artist's struggles, direct addresses to a lover, third-person accounts of Jesus's journey in the wilderness, and a curious encounter in a hotel—the presence of multiple personas does not contribute to the coherence of the cycle in a conventional way. However, even though the cyclicity of *Despite and Still* cannot be established with the common criteria of tangible narrative or common themes, Barber's choice of texts and settings, together with musical devices such as tritones, chromaticism, conflicting triads and tonal ambiguity, create an interrelated network of meanings that comment on the notion of creativity from a variety of perspectives.

In altering the title and the beginning of Graves's poem from "A Last Poem" to "A Last Song," Barber turned Graves's poem about poetry writing into the composer's song about song composition. As

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[27] Joyce's letter to Frank Budgen in Lawrence, *The Odyssey of Style,* 181.

the protagonist is transformed from a poet into a composer, the song invites us to contemplate the act of composition rather than writing. The fact that the poem can be transplanted in the medium of song with only a minor change of the words not only speaks to the affinity shared by the two art forms, but also illustrates the fact that Barber found resonance in the plight of an artist described by Graves. Echoing Joyce's employment of unusual writing techniques that are not normally associated with the genre of the novel, Barber's choice of text and musical language perhaps pays a musical homage to the writer and joins Joyce in protesting that "originality" indeed produces "its own reward," which does "invariably conduce to success."

The highly personal nature of *Despite and Still* to Samuel Barber is not only evident in the composer's painstakingly meticulous text selection process,[28] but also his propensity to create "art about art." Given the breadth of Barber's literary tastes, his decision to combine texts of varying origins into a musical unit is likely driven by a desire to impose his own design and ideas onto the cycle's narrative. The changes to the titles and content of the poems, although minor, are evident of the composer's intention in creating and shaping the meanings conveyed in the cycle. Taking into account of Robert Graves's philosophy and aesthetics behind his works, one comes to see the deeper meaning that Barber's cycle carries—through his expert musical setting, the cycle highlights the presence of another figure in the artist's creative life, whose voice represents the metamorphosis of its roles as the source of inspiration and a lover. Just as how "*The White Goddess* is above all the testament of a practicing poet,"[29] *Despite and Still* is Barber's testament through which the composer experiments and expresses his approach to song composition, one that embodies his sense of quiet confidence of his original branch of originality, with which he proclaims: "I just go on doing, as they say, my own thing."[30]

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[28] Ramey, "Samuel Barber at Seventy," 19–20.
[29] Seymour-Smith, *Robert Graves*, 390.
[30] Barber in an interview with John Gruen,"And Where Has Samuel Barber Been?" *New York Times*, October 3, 1971, section 2, 21.

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